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Volume 9
9
September 2009

At Home in the Modern World

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Cover: Abbink Apartment, New York City, page 76
Photo by Dean Kaufman

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In June, Dwell unveiled the next phase of the Dwell Homes Collection, the newest addition in the world of modern prefab construction. Partnering with Lindal Cedar Homes and Marmol Radziner Prefab, Dwell will make the most of the advantages modern prefab has to offer in terms of design, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability.





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"We thought the cool thing about a garden is it's your garden, where you can suntan in your bikini bottom."

Bjarke Ingels

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The Wright Stuff

In the early days of Dwell, Frank Lloyd Wright was something of a persona non grata. There was no hard-and-fast rule keeping him out of our pages (unlike the banned adjective "zenlike"), but since our goal was to talk about people living with modern architecture, we thought we should focus on the living—even if Wright was still America's most famous architect. So when I was recently in New York and visited the Guggenheim exhibition *Frank Lloyd Wright: From Within Outward*, I was happily surprised by a number of things. It came rushing back to me that Wright was one of the reasons I became interested in architecture in the first place. His vision to reshape just about everything is nothing if not inspiring (and his exquisite Japanese woodblock–inspired renderings put today's digital excursions to shame). For me, wandering through his life's work was equivalent to listening to *Sgt. Pepper's* in its entirety—in constantly searching for something new, I easily forget how good the greats really are.

As I left the exhibition I pondered Wright's massive appeal. What makes a building like Fallingwater special to someone who is otherwise perfectly happy with today's suburban milieu, someone who would never dream of living in a modern house? The answer, I believe, lies in the fact that Wright is so resolutely American, the sort of self-made superman that only this country could produce. And his architecture captures and projects quintessential 20th-century American values, from his fascination with the automobile to his distaste for cities. Wright's buildings are sensual and ornate extensions of the American landscape, far away from the sterile and cold building blocks we too often associate with modern architecture.

By the end of the 20th century it was not Wright's vision for America that prevailed, but something closer to that of his imported European counterparts. Gropius and Mies left a long trail of university-educated architects ready to reenact their formulas for good design. Despite the fellowship at Taliesen and his numerous acolytes, Wright essentially ended with Wright. The International Style spread virally from urban-renewal project to urban-renewal project, but few of Wright's large-scale designs made it past the concept stage. Those that did, like the Marin County Civic Center, are wondrous curiosities—odd glimpses of a futuristic antique. The public's distaste for modernism has been fed by decades of increasingly mediocre designs, but our appetite for Wright is still great, largely because the promise of his most grandiose visions—which were viable even in the 1930s—remains unmet.

But we may not have to wait too much longer. It seems Wright's vision of a Living City is finding a foothold in this century, albeit in a form he would hardly recognize. In Ørestad, an area of urban development in Copenhagen, Denmark, the Bjarke Ingels Group has realized a building that owes as much to Wright as any contemporary point of reference. From afar, the Mountain Dwellings ("Think Big," p. 84) rise like a sloping hillside, the 80 apartments concealed beneath terraced hanging gardens. The design ensures each unit has privacy and outdoor space, a move straight from the Wright playbook. Even more Wrightian is the parking structure atop which the apartments sit. It allows each occupant to drive up to the level of his or her apartment, a feature that recalls both Wright's design for a planetarium that could be ascended by automobile and his penchant for dialing in creature comforts (like a museum where you continually stroll downhill). Of course, the Mountain Dwellings look nothing like Wright, but why would they? The creative substance of Wright's work bears repeating and interpretation; the style does not.

As more than half of the world's population now lives in urban areas, the Mountain Dwellings are a paragon of humane, socially responsible architecture. They take the tools and lessons that are available to us now and point the way toward a better future. The complex is the rare instance that could become an exemplar adopted in cities around the world. Whether museum-going, Frank Lloyd Wright–adoring audiences would welcome it to their towns, however, remains to be seen.

Sam Grawe, Editor-in-Chief
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All of us at Skidmore, Owings & Merrill (SOM) were delighted to see the story "An Introduction to Airport Design" in the June 2009 issue. You picked the two best airports in the world—Singapore's Changi Airport as the best international and the San Francisco International Terminal as the best in the United States—and both were designed by SOM.

Though the story does not mention SOM, we wanted to express our thanks for the kudos. We are always happy to have our ability "to get the small things right in a big way" noticed.

Elizabeth Harrison Kubany
Director of Public Relations, SOM
New York, New York

I would like to bring to your attention a small paradox in the May issue: the Tower House in "Houses We Love" ("In the Modern World"). In a magazine that has bravely taken up the mantle of sustainability, and in an issue titled "Beyond Green," why would a house in Leander, Texas, need to be clad in "massaranduba, a silvery Brazilian hardwood"? Leander is approximately 3,400 miles from Brazil. A great deal of the Brazilian Amazon rainforest has already been, and continues to be, cleared. What's wrong with good old American timber?

I suggest you require all published projects to be judged upon their sustainability and, at the very least, print a disclaimer with those that do not make a passing grade. I agree with Sam Grawe's "Editor's Note" that "just as the Enlightenment crept out of the Dark Ages, our young 21st century must jettison the practices of our carbon-chewing-and-spewing industrial age and welcome an environmentally enlightened era." Though we need to play catch-up-in-a-hurry, some things just do not make sense! The first goal of any sustainable building must be to use local materials and expertise as much as possible.

Dion Wilson
St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago

Editors' Note: There is no perfect way to score sustainability—the questions are too vast—and no perfect answers, just suggestions for a way forward. We agree that using a tropical hardwood does not make the most sense when there are local alternatives. However, other aspects of a project, such as solar orientation or passive heating and cooling, can in some regard make up for it.

I have enjoyed Dwell for years, but your profile on Terunobu Fujimori (May 2009) is the stuff of inspiration: His magical creations spark such joy! Thank you for including such a unique modern designer in your pages. Since the issue appeared in my mailbox, I find myself gazing and dreaming over the pictures again and again.

Michelle Marchese
Northampton, Massachusetts

I might have to start a Dan Maginn fan club. His essay "Underdone," in the April issue, had me cracking up on the subway on the way to work—so much so that I looked like a genuine crazy New Yorker! I've shared the essay with others and reread it more than once. Maginn's May contribution, "At Home in the Zone," was more informative but still very entertaining. Good stuff!

Will Sakran
Brooklyn, New York

In the April 2009 issue, you say "the best ideas rarely develop in a vacuum," and Christine Ho Ping Kong and Peter Tan ("Inside Job") bring that quote to a truism. Ideas simply bloom in Toronto with these two creative artisans, who took an ugly warehouse and made it come alive with interesting woodwork, a shower that makes the two delightful youngsters appear to be standing in falling rain, and the built-in elements such as the stairs that show what can be done in small spaces. In fact, all the renovations in the April issue highlight how creativity and simplicity can produce grand living.

Ben Laime
Albuquerque, New Mexico

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Storage Solutions for Small Spaces

This month's Apartments issue features petite places that pack a whole lot of design ingenuity into very few square feet. For more clever space-saving strategies and superefficient furniture, visit dwell.com and check out our storage-solutions slideshow.
dwell.com/storage-solutions

Back-to-School Special

There's nothing like a little design therapy to relieve the sting of summer's end and first-day-of-school butterflies. Get a dose at dwell.com with an online exclusive about dormitory design that will give students good reasons to relish the return of the school year.
dwell.com/back-to-school-special





Graduate Student Housing at Harvard University by Kyu Sung Wook Architects

Max Andrews
Max Andrews is a British curator and writer currently based in Barcelona. Yoel Karaso and Cecilia Tham, the architect couple whose home renovation he profiled for this month's "My House" (p. 45), turned out to share not only Andrews's relish for cooking—they make a mean teriyaki salmon, he says—but also a wall: Karaso and Tham's office is in the building next door to Andrews's humbler abode.

Amber Bravo
Freelance writer and former Dwell senior editor Amber Bravo traveled from her home in Connecticut to Massachusetts for this month's "Off the Grid" (p. 52) about developer Blair Galinksy's ambition to green a brownfield in Boston. In addition to knowing about the cleanup efforts along the Chelsea and Mill creeks, Galinsky—the father of two high-school-aged girls—was also up to speed on the suburban soccer leagues. (Turns out, Bravo's former high school, Acton-Boxborough Regional, is ranked number one.)

Karrie Jacobs
Karrie Jacobs, Dwell's founding editor, traveled five subway stops from her home in Brooklyn to visit Jeanette and Mike Abbink's apartment ("Creative Types," p. 76). What Jacobs and the Abbinks have in common (besides shared history during Dwell's formative years) is a view of the illuminated clock on the Williamsburg Bank Building from the windows of their respective bedrooms—although, unlike the Abbinks, Jacobs actually has to climb out of her bed to tell time by it.

Dean Kaufman
Dean Kaufman is a photographer living in Brooklyn. For this issue, he shot Jeanette and Mike Abbink's apartment, just a few blocks from his own home ("Creative Types," p. 76). Jeanette, the founding creative director of Dwell, and Mike, a designer and typographer, are more used to being the art directors than the subjects of a photo shoot. Though the pair had some trouble assuming the new roles, their collaboration with Kaufman led to a great session. "It must have been an exercise in trust and letting go for them," Kaufman says.

Sally McGrane
Writer Sally McGrane flew to Copenhagen from her home in Berlin to visit the Mountain Dwellings ("Thing Big," p. 84). She was particularly impressed by the Victor Ash murals in the garage of wolves and moose atop wrecked cars. What she found hard to believe, however, was that David Zahle, a resident and one of the architects who helped design the building, has never had any dreams about the "car cathedral" under his home.

James Nestor
As part of his research for writing this month's 101 about product design (p. 100), James Nestor attended a seminar titled "Sell Out," wherein he learned that to ensure a product sells, one must gratuitously promote the product at every given moment. To wit: Nestor's incredible and historic tome *Get High Now (Without Drugs)* has just been released by Chronicle Books. In it you will find over 175 bizarre methods in which everyone from ancient Greeks to hippies have gotten "naturally" high, from performing breathwork to consuming giraffe livers.

Jens Passoth
Jens Passoth is a Berlin-based German photographer whose favorite shoots are those that feature either people or places. He combined his photographic pleasures for this issue, traveling to Copenhagen to capture BIG architect David Zahle and his family in their Mountain Dwellings apartment ("Think Big," p. 84).

Audrey Tempelsman
Audrey Tempelsman is a lifelong New Yorker, but her work as a design and travel writer takes her far and wide. This month, Tempelsman, a former dwell.com blogger, wrote about an apartment in Warsaw, Poland ("Finishing Touch," p. 136), before jetting off to Vancouver, which she followed with a trip to Argentina.

Photos by Timothy Hursley


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In the Modern World

The fashion of facial hair may come and go, but the Milan debut of new French company Moustache marked the introduction of a collection—and collective—that was designed to stand the test of time. Bringing together the Gallic talent of Inga Sempé, Matali Crasset, Big-Game, François Azambourg, and Ana Mir and Emili Padrós, this mise-en-scène starring their latest work was shot to dramatic effect in the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris. moustache.fr

September Calendar
Important dates in art and design, with architecture thrown in for good measure: Welcome to Dwell's timeline of the month.

September 1–30
San Franciscans raise their cable cars for the sixth-annual Architecture and the City festival. aiasf.org/archandcity

Salone Internazionale del Mobile

The big question at Milan's annual furniture fair this year was how the design world would react to the economic slump. The answer was apparently by doing the only thing it knows how to do: manufacturing new furniture (albeit in smaller quantities). The preponderance of sofas indicated that many companies were returning to their strengths, while at Euroluce, LEDs and CFLs shed new light on lamp design. Check out our picks for best in show.

Flower
By Pierre Paulin for Magis
magisdesign.com
We imagine Darth Vader would look like quite the stylish Sith Lord sitting in this translucent polycarbonate petal. Paulin, who passed away in June, crafted ergonomic designs for over 50 years and Flower, his first collaboration with Magis, proves that the Force was always strong with this French legend.





Axor Urquiola
By Patricia Urquiola for Axor
axor-design.com
We've seen many bathrooms in our nine-plus years since Dwell's inception, but none quite like this. To introduce the Axor Urquiola collection, which includes a multitude of hardware, fixtures, and basins, Axor dropped this meticulous mirrored bathroom cube—a throne worthy of a Lombard count—into the baroque environs of Milan's 17th-century Palazzo Visconti.

MILAN
FURNITURE
09

September 4 (1846)
Architect Daniel Burnham, codesigner of one of the first "skyscrapers," the ten-story Montauk Building in Chicago, is born.

September 6
MIX: Nine San Diego Architects and Designers closes at the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego. mcasd.org

Frank, Henry, and Ernest
By Donna Wilson for SCP
scp.co.uk
No need for dull introductions. These playful pouffes by Scottish textile maven Donna Wilson have more personality than any old Tom, Dick, or Harry, and they'll be more than pleased to make your (rear end's) acquaintance.



Bolle
By Air Design Group for Living Divani
livingdivani.com
When life gets hectic, it's only natural to daydream about stopping time for a moment, setting down your spinning plates, putting your feet up, and enjoying a cup of tea from the comfort of your living room. *Twilight Zone* superpowers notwithstanding, this epoxy powder-painted low table by Singaporean duo Air Design Group gives us hope that a happy afternoon spent with a book and a brew is waiting for us in suspended animation.



Table, Bench, Chair
By Sam Hecht/Industrial Facility for Established & Sons
establishedandsons.com
Drawing inspiration from psychologically programmed color patterns on the benches of the Toyko subway, Sam Hecht transformed a simple solid-oak plank with subtle structural cues of bent beech—creating a multitasking piece of furniture that suggests a multitude of uses without a strict agenda.

MILAN FURNITURE 09

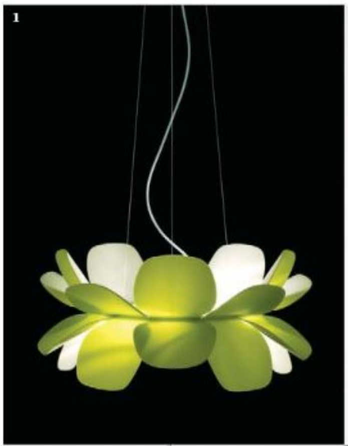


September 15
The Architectural League of New York's *Situated Technologies: Toward the Sentient City* opens in New York City. archleague.org

September 16
Architect Sverre Fehn: Intuition, Reflection, Construction opens at the Museum of Finnish Architecture in Helsinki. mfa.fi



Meryl Streep
Amy Adams
Written for the Screen and Directed by Nora Ephron
Julie & Julia
Based on Two True Stories
COLUMBIA PICTURES PRESENTS AN EASY THERE TIGER/AMY ROBINSON PRODUCTION A LAURENCE MARK PRODUCTION A FILM BY NORA EPHRON "JULIE & JULIA" STANLEY TUCCI CHRIS MESSINA LINDA EMOND MUSIC BY ALEXANDRE DESPLAT
COSTUME DESIGNER ANN ROTH EDITOR RICHARD MARKS, A.C.E. PRODUCTION DESIGNER MARK RICKER DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY STEPHEN GOLDBLATT, ASC BSC EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS SCOTT RUDIN DONALD J. LEE, JR. DANA STEVENS BASED ON THE BOOKS "JULIE & JULIA" BY JULIE POWELL AND "MY LIFE IN FRANCE" BY JULIA CHILD WITH ALEX PRUD'HOMME
PG-13 PARENTS STRONGLY CAUTIONED
SOME MATERIAL MAY BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR CHILDREN UNDER 13
BRIEF STRONG LANGUAGE AND SOME SENSUALITY
Read the Back Bay and Anchor Books
JulieAndJulia.com
SCREENPLAY BY NORA EPHRON
August 7
PRODUCED BY LAURENCE MARK NORA EPHRON AMY ROBINSON ERIC STEEL
DIRECTED BY NORA EPHRON
COLUMBIA PICTURES


1


2


3


4


5


6

1. Infiore *by Lagranja for Estiluz*
2. Pressed Glass pendants *by Tom Dixon*
3. Dome *by Naoto Fukasawa for Panasonic*
4. Smithfield *by Jasper Morrison for Flos*
5. Kisawings *by Kisa Kawakami for Yamagiwa*
6. Le Soleil *by Vicente García Jiménez for Foscarini*
7. Flatliner *by Jason Bruges for Established & Sons*
8. Landmarks *by Sylvain Willenz for Established & Sons*
9. Wood floor lamp *by the Campana Brothers for Skitsch*
10. Drink *by Dante Donegani and Giovanni Lauda for Rotaliana*
11. Lolita *by Nika Zupanc for Moooi*
12. Caravaggio *by Cecilie Manz for Lightyears*

MILAN
LIGHTS
09





MILAN
SOFAS
09



Edward *by Carlo Colombo for Poliform*



Mabel *by Donna Wilson for SCP*



Wabi *by Francesco Rota for Paola Lenti*



AC Lounge *by Antonio Citterio for B&B Italia*



Cityloft *by Pascal Mourgue for Ligne Roset*



Place *by Jasper Morrison for Vitra*



Arch *by Jean-Marie Massaud for MDF Italia*



Jean *by Antonio Citterio for B&B Italia*



Fergana *by Patricia Urquiola for Moroso*



Oscar *by Matthew Hilton for SCP*



Hoop *by Arik Levy for Living Divani*



Boxplay *by Claesson Koivisto Rune for Swedese*

September 24–27
The designerati descend on London for 100% Design—four days of modernism plus bangers and mash. 100percentdesign.co.uk

September 27
Father and Son: Eliel and Eero Saarinen at Cranbrook closes at Michigan's Grand Rapids Arts Museum. artmuseumgr.org

Hive Design

The recent disappearance of vast numbers of worker bees from their colonies sounded an unexpectedly resonant ecological alarm. It quickly became clear—to beekeepers, scientists, and the average honey-eating consumer alike—that a decline of bee populations would lead not only to higher price tags on our beloved natural sweetener but also potentially to the disastrous malfunctioning of entire ecosystems. Campaigns were launched, blockbuster movies were made, and educational curricula were developed, all with the goal of raising awareness about the plight of a tiny creature we'd long thought of only for its ability to produce exquisite honey and inflict equally exquisite pain.

Outside of the movie theaters and the classrooms, more industrious souls began working on behalf of the worker bee by learning the secrets of apiculture. While beekeeping has been practiced since antiquity, the effects of the modern Colony Collapse Disorder awakened a fresh interest in tending hives as both a hobby and a business opportunity. These small, distributed operations spread into city backyards and even onto rooftops in neighborhoods too dense for lawns. Honey has become a shining star of the local-food movement, promising special immune-boosting and allergy-fighting properties for people who consume the sweet stock of their region.



Fourteen floors above the street, on the top of Toronto's historic Fairmont Royal York hotel, three beehives were installed in the summer of 2008 to produce honey for the hotel's restaurant. A veteran of the local-food movement, the Royal York has kept gardens on its roof for 12 years, cultivating dozens of herb varieties, vegetables, berries, and edible flowers to infuse a largely organic menu. Executive chef David Garcelon says adding hives was a natural extension of the hotel's homegrown tradition. "The chef's apprentices maintain the gardens," he says, "and they began to notice a remarkable variety of insect life around the plantings. We put three hives in and produced 380 pounds of honey in the first season."

With training and collaboration from the Toronto Beekeepers Cooperative, the Royal York's culinary apprentices have honed the necessary skills to protect and collect from their micro-apiary. With three more hives added this year, they hope to be able to produce 700 pounds of honey annually—more than two-thirds of the restaurant's 1,000-pound annual demand. "Our motivation for keeping bees is part of our environmental mission," says Garcelon, "but it's also great education for the apprentices and the best way to get great products into our restaurants." Beyond educating the staff, the hotel offers tours of the rooftop for guests during its afternoon tea service. Sensitive tasters might even be able to guess which flowering corner of Toronto provided pollen for the Royal York bees.

fairmont.com/RoyalYork

Square Meal

Max Lamb

The work of British designer Max Lamb oozes a wish-you-had-thought-of-that creativity. By playing with the design process—from creating pewter casts in the sand of a Cornwall beach, to carving a living room set from a giant block of polystyrene—Lamb supplants the seemingly impenetrable industrial world with one that can be manipulated by hand. Dwell caught up with him at Milan Design Week.



Ideal working environment: By the sea, in the mountains, or anywhere that is in the middle of nowhere.

Lucky break: I haven't had one big lucky break, but loads of little ones that have built up allow me to do what I love doing. It began when I was born into a very supportive family.

Dream commission: I'd like to commission myself to build my own house, studio, and workshop. One day…

Hero: Dr. Andrew Dunning, my grandfather.

Annoying buzzword: "Design-art." Please, this is not fair on artists and designers.

Best compliment: I can't remember. I'm not very good at receiving compliments and usually get embarrassed.

Currently reading: *South West Granite: A History of the Granite Industry in Cornwall and Devon.*

Last film watched: I am very out of date. *Quantum of Solace*. It's good but I still prefer the original Albert Broccoli [James Bond] films.

Most recent playlist: "Not Played"—a playlist with all the music on my iTunes that I haven't yet listened to. It's amazing what I keep finding.

The house is on fire, the first thing you grab: My girlfriend.

Your Eureka! moment: I'm still waiting for this moment.

Worst-ever idea: It's difficult to pinpoint my worst. Many of my ideas are bad ideas, but I work with them until they become good ideas. At least I try.

Best advice: Keep practicing. Take your time. Measure twice, cut once. I wish I followed my advice more often.

When not designing: I visit car-boot sales and flea markets, and I ride my bike.

The best seat in the house: Box chair by Enzo Mari to sit and work. It is an interesting chair, strangely overproportioned but very comfortable.

Wish you had: Listened during history classes at school. In fact, I wish I had listened more during most of the classes at school. I was too focused on sport and design, and as a consequence I have very poor general knowledge. Luckily I became a designer.

Looking forward to: Tomorrow, and beyond.

maxlamb.org



Q & A


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Camps: A Guide to 21st-Century Space
Charlie Hailey
MIT Press, $29.95

Offering far more than a reminiscence of summer sleepaways, author Charlie Hailey addresses questions of "identity, residency, safety, and tensions of mobility and fixity" in three campy categories: Autonomy, Control, and Necessity. Autonomy indulges in hedonist escapes like Nevada's Burning Man festival; Control covers those spaces guarded by force, like POW holding areas; and Necessity discusses the gray area in between, such as FEMA cities erected after natural disasters. This extensive field guide deftly navigates these socially, politically, and spatially relevant places, which are often relegated to the fringes of our built environment. Another season of *Bug Juice* this ain't.

Louis I Kahn
Robert McCarter
Phaidon, $85

When charting architectural development, it generally follows that architects build upon the generation that preceded them—from modernism to postmodernism to deconstruction and so on. Not so for Louis Kahn, who defied categorization by stretching back centuries in search of inspiration. In ancient ruins and great buildings of the past, Kahn found recipes for a different path forward—based not on how buildings looked but rather how they made you feel. This massive tome—now in bicep-friendly paperback—explores Kahn's epic oeuvre (including rather convincing digital images of his unbuilt work) to prove he was that rare architect who worked for all mankind.

Conversations With Frank Gehry
Barbara Isenberg
Knopf, $40

He's the world's only architect to guest star on *The Simpsons* and appear in Apple's Think Different ads, but how well do you really know Frank Gehry? Think what you will of his work, but in this easily digestible series of interviews, the Canadian—born Ephraim Owen Goldberg—comes off as a pretty regular guy who happens to be the world's most famous architect—not the villainous, megalomaniacal starchitect stereotype we've been trained to expect.

Architecture Now! Houses
Philip Jodidio
Taschen, $39.99

The latest in Taschen's ever-growing *Architecture Now!* series (does Philip Jodidio ever sleep?), this volume takes us on a fantastic visual voyage around the world to some of the most stunning structures designed for dwelling: Cantilevered quarters jut out from fields in front of mountain quarries, stone residences emerge from rocky silhouetted cliffs, and modern glass palaces disappear into the horizon of the seas they overlook. We love these modern houses so much you might recognize some straight from the pages (and covers) of Dwell, like the Floating House by MOS.



Photo by Peter Belanger

01



02



03



04

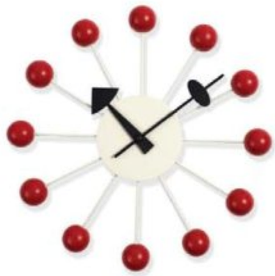


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06



07



08



№ 185 03 68456 012

customer file

Michelle Reter / Ann Arbor MI.

01 My headless Hummels—sorry grandma
02 Reminders of the endless summers of my youth
03 The shoes that got me through my first marathon
04 My Foscarini Twiggy Table Lamp from YLighting
05 The flat number from my year in Paris
06 The soundtrack of my high school years
07 Nelson Ball Clock that tells me its quitting time
08 Emery the wonder dog
09 Wooden box where I put my wedding ring every night
10 The perfume bottle that sits on my vanity

09

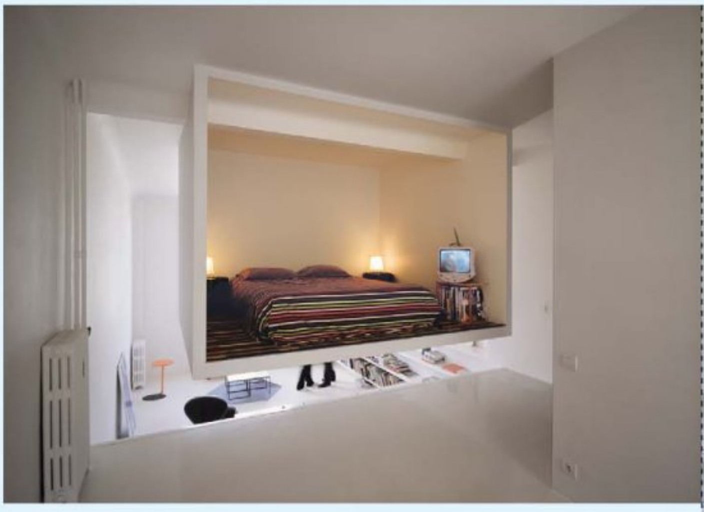


10



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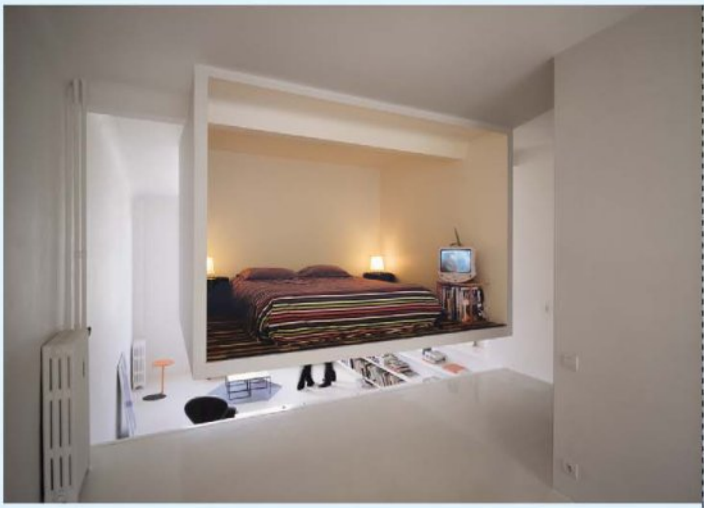


T0049
Haginaka, Tokyo
16A Architects
16a.jp

Photos by Gaston Bergeret (Chez Valentin), Satoshi Asakawa/zoom (T0049)

Houses We Love





Chez Valentin
Paris, France
Emmanuel Combarel Dominique
Marrec Architects
ecdm.fr





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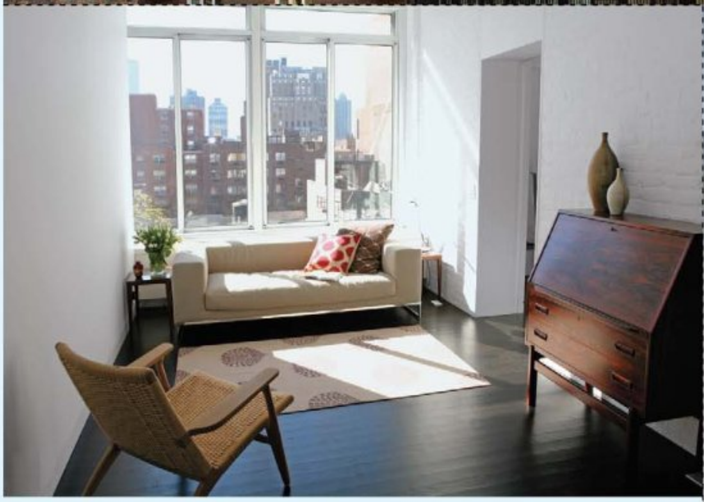
Photos by Gaston Bergeret (Chez Valentin), Satoshi Asakawa/zoom (T0049)

Houses We Love

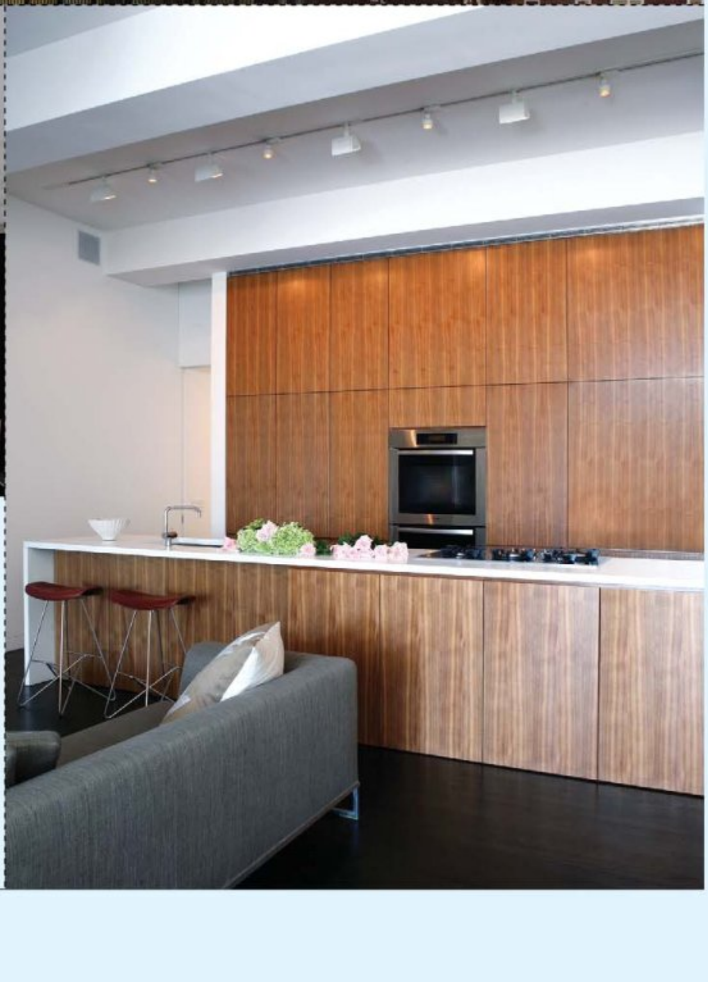




Westerdok
Amsterdam, the Netherlands
MVRDV
mvrdv.nl



Gerberg Wolfson Residence
New York, New York
Messana O'Rorke Architects
messanaororke.com



Photos by Rob 't Hart (Westerdok), Costa Picadas (Gerberg Wolfson)

Houses We Love

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL RUG:

GOODWEAVE'S CAMPAIGN TO END CHILD LABOR

The beauty of a handmade carpet is inextricably linked to the people who make it. Yet today approximately 300,000 children are exploited to weave the rugs that adorn our homes.

For more than a decade, RugMark International – the nonprofit organization that independently inspects looms and rescues children in South Asia – has helped.

RugMark's certification program verifies that only skilled adult artisans make the rugs that are imported by more than 60 U. S. and Canadian companies. These rugs are sold through nearly 2,000 retail outlets.

Since 1995 the number of children trapped in illegal carpet-making work has dropped from one million to 300,000. Educational programs funded by certified rug sales and donations ensure these children receive rehabilitation, daycare, formal schooling and vocational training.



Sold into bondage, Sunita Jimba worked 18-hour days, forced to pay down her food and shelter "debt." She was rescued by RugMark in 2005. Funds generated by the GoodWeave certification pay for rehabilitation and education of thousands of children like Sunita.

THE MOST BEAUTIFUL RUG GETS A MORE BEAUTIFUL LABEL

The RugMark label (shown above on the left) is being replaced by the GoodWeave™ label (shown above on the right).

Building on 15 years of protecting children, RugMark and its industry partners are introducing GoodWeave, an expanded certification program. GoodWeave will help reach the children still toiling on the looms, improve working conditions for adults, and address the environmental impacts of rug weaving. Like the RugMark label it replaces, GoodWeave offers the best assurance that your carpet or rug is child-labor-free.

Look for the GoodWeave label in stores starting this fall. Visit **www.GoodWeave.org** to purchase a certified rug and learn more.

WWW.GOODWEAVE.ORG • (866) 784-6275 • INFO@GOODWEAVE.ORG

Everything Must Go

When Cecilia Tham and Yoel Karaso of Habitan Architects bought their first-floor apartment in an 1894 block of the Fort Pienc neighborhood of Barcelona in 2005, they knew they were taking a risk. Casa Alí Bei was a bargain because it is *afectado* ("affected")—that is, the land is zoned for redevelopment. A baby (Hanna) on the way, the possibility of being evicted, and a tight budget necessitated a canny renovation strategy, yet one that still honored the dazzling turn-of-the-century tile work and ornate moldings. A stone's throw from Jean Nouvel's Torre Agbar, the apartment, like the neighborhood, has been reborn as a patchwork of old and new. Tham tells us the story.



Story by Max Andrews
Photos by Gunnar Knechtel

Tham and Karaso of Habitan Architects adore the transportable kitchen "furniture" they designed, though not as much as their newest creation—daughter Hanna.



On one side of us is housing for young people and the other is a nursing home—we're like the middle-aged in between! Being *afectado* means the city could technically take over our building to construct similar civil projects, but they would have to buy back all 16 apartments. We really fell for the building and these fabulous original features—the elaborate decorative plasterwork ceiling and the tiled floors. Plus we have a big expansive view at the back, which is quite precious in the city—we overlook a soccer pitch built on former railway tracks. (Not that we ever really watch a game!) We were naturally worried because of the zoning—yes, buying was a gamble—but nothing has happened for almost 40 years, and maybe it never will. I was also pregnant with Hanna at the time, and so we needed a place that we could make fun and family friendly without investing a lot of money. The big, big bonus was the price—which was only U.S. $317,000, half the price of a similar place in this area. We just could have never otherwise afforded such a large home. ⊪





The couple took down a wall to create the open kitchen and lounge space where Tham and Hanna play (top). Wooden panels that aped a Swiss chalet also came down out of the "interior patio" (bottom left), making the dining room more palatable. Ikea bookshelves ably serve the entryway (bottom right).

We spent about four months on the renovation, and our plan really stemmed from this possibility that the building might be expropriated—we want to be able to take the most valuable elements with us if we ever have to leave. Yoel and I didn't design our kitchen and bathroom to be fitted into any walls; they are more like furniture. So if one day we are kicked out we could redo it somewhere else.

We really love to cook and much of our home life revolves around our kitchen. When we have friends over it's great to buzz around here; it's almost like a cooking show. We're a very equal couple. We wanted the kitchen island to be a single form that we could both use. We can both cook and we can both wash the dishes. The whole thing is really easy to clean as it's just one main surface that you can wipe down. So the preparation surfaces, the hob [cooktop], and the sink are accessible from both sides. It's a simple, fun, form-follows-function principle: Store, wash, prepare, cook, eat. The other end functions as a breakfast table where we eat most of the time. Behind the fridge "tower" is a microwave oven, conventional oven, and dishwasher below.

We used materials that create warmth—the rectangular sink is made of chocolate-colored slate, which looks like it wants to be eaten, and the main structure is birch marine plywood. We reused the offcuts to make a pattern for the floor of our little guest room, as the original floor tiles were not in such a good state there. Although it's delicate as flooring, the plywood has a real glow, and it was a thrifty solution.

It's typical for Barcelona buildings from this period that the bedrooms are divided with decorative plaster columns and a cornice to create a curtained-off alcove for the bed, separating it from the more public part of the rest of the room. We opened up our bedroom, but we conserved that feature in Hanna's room, and now every morning she wants to play dress-up. She also loves the bathroom.

When this building was constructed the toilets would have been outside. In our previous place we had a tiny shower in a tiny bathroom that you could barely stretch your arms out in, so we moved here knowing we wanted to make the bathroom something special. We planned this grand freestanding bathtub-and-sink unit with the same materials as the kitchen. When we first showed the design to the carpenter he of course said, "This is impossible!" In the end we did it, and it's big enough that we can bathe together with Hanna. You don't really feel like you're in a typical bathroom. It's more like a regular room. We even have a TV over in the corner, and I love to watch *Friends* in the bath! It's wonderful for Hanna, too; there is never a problem getting her washed as it's such a fun environment to splash about in.

What we've made for the three of us is a home where you can clearly see the contrast between the old and the new "takeout" elements that harmoniously overlap.





The original 19th-century flower-motif tiles in Hanna's room (left) set the tone for the colorful decor. The standalone bath (right), which needn't be filled to be enjoyed, echoes the same materials and principles as the kitchen: a plywood-and-slate structure that can be easily removed.

hivemodern.com









marcel wanders v.i.p. chair, 2000 - avl bench, 2006 - carbon chair, 2004 - made in holland by moooi

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The Cutting Edge
The kitchen cupboards and drawers look pricey but are simply faced in white polyethylene from Dura Plastics, the same material used for cutting boards. The couple bought big sheets, hired a carpenter to cut them to size, and added basic hardware-store handles to complete the look. duraplas.com

Nice Tubes
In the bathroom, Tham created an ingeniously cozy lighting feature by bundling together cardboard poster tubes with flat nylon straps and fitting them with low-wattage bulbs. Tham uses another of these homespun creations to house her sewing fabrics.

Put on the Red Light
In the back of the apartment an uninsulated enclosed balcony—is used as a formal dining area and hangout space. The views toward the sea are great, but it is chilly in the winter. Putting in insulation was prohibitively expensive, so the couple instead devised a direct-heat solution. A cluster of 150-watt red lamps—like those that heat a chicken farm—hangs above the dining table. Depending on how much heat the family needs, they can unscrew some of the bulbs.



No Curtain Needed
Adjoining the bathroom is a wet room with a shower. The whole floor is covered with Golden Decking's Goldeck ipe decking tiles with a drain in one corner. goldendecking.com

Cable Access
The wiring in the apartment was nearly 50 years old and needed redoing. In keeping with the couple's low-intervention, low-budget strategy, they fitted all the new installations (the electrical wiring, the water and gas pipes, and the halogen spotlights) into industrial perforated cable trays by BTicino suspended from the ceiling. This avoided invasive fittings in the walls or ceiling and helped preserve the apartment's fin de siècle charm. bticino.com

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Green Light District

On a former brownfield site across the river from downtown Boston, a renovated turn-of-the-century lithography factory trades in carbon copies for a lighter carbon footprint.

Ask any town-proud Bostonian the correct way to decipher Prudential Tower's chromatic beacon, and they'll likely recite:

Steady blue, clear view
Flashing blue, clouds due
Steady red, rain ahead
Flashing red, snow instead.

Fittingly, a project that is sure to become one of the city's newest landmarks nods to this vernacular tradition while concerning itself with a new climatic issue: energy consumption.

The chimney of Forbes Lithography Company's defunct boiler house stands as a foil for the 240-foot turbine perched beside it—the icon for Urban Design and Development's ambitious mixed-use redevelopment project, Forbes Park, located along the greater Boston waterfront in Chelsea, Massachusetts. Upon completion, the newly dubbed Forbes Park will boast 600 residential units, and 12 acres of restored marsh and coastal grassland will become a public park while serving as a bastion for renewable energy. The idea is that the turbine, which will produce one million kilowatt-hours of power annually—a surfeit of free, clean energy—will glow with lights that use a three-color system to indicate the status of the regional power grid. The message will also be conveyed inside each residential unit via small industrial lights, called "Forbes Orbs," which will advise residents to curtail energy use or proceed with tasks like laundry and dishwashing depending on the building's level of power generation.

The 70 residential units in Building X—the first building to be renovated in this four-phase plan—range from 686 to 1,233 square feet and start at ▶

Photo by Peter Vanderwarker

Story by Amber Bravo

The elaborate storm-water management system was engineered specifically for capturing and recirculating storm water from Building X (above). Two fish ladders and large expanses of restored salt marsh encourage wildlife to breed nearby. In the distance, the turbine spins animately beside the Forbes factory's defunct chimney.

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You have 10,000 tastebuds that don't take kindly to bland cereal. So we make over twenty Kashi® cereals with goodies like crunchy nuts, ripe fruits, whole grains and golden honey. After all, we believe healthy can be yummy. Meet our cereals at **kashi.com**

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Brownfield of Dreams

Before the developers at Urban Design and Development could even begin to think about renovating the Forbes factory buildings, they had to focus on greening the brownfield.

Site Cleanup

Nearly four years of work went into cleanup, including the salvaging and reuse of about 80 percent of the deconstructed building material; waste removal and encapsulation; the removal of 23 drainage pipes that emptied untreated storm water and sanitary waste into the Chelsea River; asbestos and lead-paint abatement; the supercleaning and conversion of an oil bunker; and power-plant decommissioning.

Salt Marsh Restoration

In addition to rebuilding the sea wall that runs along the waterfront, the developers put considerable effort into restoring the salt marshes along the eastern banks of Forbes Park. Looking at the newly landscaped eastern field, where the slight depressions will transform into vernal ponds, it's hard to envision what was here before. "When we first bought the site, this area had huge mounds of garbage; it had underground thinner tanks and tiling tanks; and it was all paved," explains Galinsky. "It was as different from this as you could imagine."

Storm-Water Management

A substantial amount of engineering went into developing the site's storm-water management system so that Forbes Park could operate independent of the municipal system. A complex set of canals will recycle water for irrigation purposes. The main canal also contains fish ladders, providing an ideal breeding ground for herring and alewife. If there's ever a hundred-year storm, a brackish storm-water catchment will readjust salinity before releasing water back into the river.



around $244,000. Adhering to a strict 80 percent recycled material policy, the developers preserved much of the building's original structure, including the exposed brick interiors and unique funnel-shaped support columns—whose high thermal mass works in concert with the building's passive heating and cooling features. In order to get natural light and air circulation into each unit, the architects split the nearly 100-foot-wide building in half, creating an open breezeway through the center of the structure. This allows for windows on at least two sides of each unit. During the warmer months, the central atrium creates a chimney effect, sucking warm air out of the units and venting it up and out of the building. The large prefabricated steel windows push open from the bottom, increasing air circulation and obviating the need for air-conditioning.

"This is the first project where we've completely eliminated drywall from our design vocabulary," developer Blair Galinsky says proudly. "These units also don't have painted surfaces, they're just the natural, pre-existing materials." In addition to passive structural features, all the energy-efficient accoutrements are in order: dual flush toilets, Energy Star appliances, FSC-certified red oak partitions, and a strong link to the outdoors with 7,000 square feet of shared roof space.

The emphasis on communal outdoor space goes well beyond the auspices of the condominium association, as the 12-acre waterfront portion of Forbes Park will be fully open to the public. If the multiphase redevelopment project proceeds as Urban Design and Development plans, the grounds will become a fully functioning interactive renewable energy park. "You look around and you can see airplanes and tankers and highways," says Galinsky, "but right here it's a little refuge in the middle of the city."

Like many turn-of-the-19th-century industrial sites, the Forbes factory predated the existence of the EPA and the local DEP, and its owners had no qualms about polluting the site and nearby water source. "The previous owners used the Band-Aid approach," explains Galinsky. "We bought the site knowing that we would shoulder the burden of the cleanup, but the state has a great tool for brownfield developers called a 'covenant not to sue.' Rather than penalizing the state for the pollution, it encourages cleanup by offering loans, grants, and some liability risk protection." Though the units hit all the key notes—and hues—in the spectrum of sustainable design, it is the restoration of the natural site that really sets Forbes Park apart. In some cases, the most brilliant change is that of brown to green.

Forbes Park will be a pedestrian preferred site, with cars directed immediately into an underground parking facility beneath Building X. A footbridge leads from the building to an eco-trail, whose main feature is a cluster of five Civil War–era pin-oak trees that were spared during the construction process.

Say the words "sleeper sofa" in polite company and you're likely to elicit a chorus of audible groans punctuated with a colorful expletive or two. Everyone, it seems, has had a similarly pained experience with the less-than-the-sum-of-its-parts piece of furniture. Beset by sinking mattresses, horizontal bars that dig into your back, and stale crumbs in every nook and cranny, the sleeper sofa has a universally negative reputation that may be well earned. Thankfully, that reputation is also outdated.

To review a new crop of sofa beds we recruited Apartment Therapy cofounder Maxwell Gillingham-Ryan, who believes that sleepers have been saddled with a set of misplaced expectations. "They've got a bad rap, and they should," he says plainly. "But only because everyone compares them to beds. They're not beds." The double-duty divan's space-saving multifunctionality and improved design, both aesthetic and empirical, has all but resolved its identity crisis.

We're nothing if not optimists, and we believe you can enjoy a Gene Kelly double feature followed by a good night's rest. Gillingham-Ryan agrees: "Sofa beds are incredibly useful whether you've got a small or large place, and you don't have to spend a fortune to get something that's just 'less evil' than the uncomfortable sleeper you may remember." Lie back and relax as we recover a pocketful of loose change and unravel the hidden secrets of the sleeper.

A Note on Our Expert:
Maxwell Gillingham-Ryan makes a living by helping people happily inhabit and decorate their homes. Though he started designing consumer products like wallpaper and lighting after college, it was a teaching stint at a Waldorf school that got him thinking seriously about how the spaces we occupy influence the way we learn, work, and live. He launched an interior-design business, the aptly named Apartment Therapy; an eponymous book and blog followed, and before long, the AT online network encompassed cities across the country and four additional sites, ensuring that accessible design is always at your fingertips.

Rest Assured

From sitting and sleeping to lolling and loitering, these new sleeper sofas are workaholics of relaxation—on either the day or the night shift.



Story by Jordan Kushins
Photos by Jim Bastardo

Nomade-Express by Ligne Roset
From $4,150 / H 37.5" x W 80" x D 43.25" / Available in over 500 fabric options / ligne-roset-usa.com

Expert Opinion: I first found out about this piece from AT readers, actually. It's been incredibly popular for a long time on our sites. Because the function is shown in the design—it just folds down flat—it seems very approachable, and it's almost fun to open it out to a bed. Plus, Ligne Roset always has beautiful colors and fabrics. For an apartment dweller, this would be my top pick.

What We Think: Though the flat fold of the Nomade-Express is vaguely reminiscent of a futon, the soft, tufted cushion has nothing in common with that college-friendly, dense, immovable mass. We like the slim aluminum legs, which help make the Nomade look so light on its feet. The price, however, is not as slight, so this would be a better fit displayed proudly in the living room rather than tucked into a guest room or office.



Wallpaper by Mark Giglio (Kabegami in purple)



Vincent Twin Sleeper by CB2

$999 / H 29.25" x W 51" x D 36" / Available in linen / cb2.com

Expert Opinion: Sitting in this is very comfortable: It's a little more lounge-y than a typical loveseat, which is a big plus. The mattress is a little squishy, though, and I don't think I'd want to spend more than a few nights on it. It would be particularly good in a small office, where you want the sleeper option but primarily just need a sofa.

What We Think: The slightly angled arms break up the boxy form of this twin sleeper, which would be a tight squeeze for two but ideal for a single houseguest. If the mere thought of a coil mattress is enough to give you a case of the night sweats, fear not: This one comes equipped with a foam cushion topper, and the Vincent's price makes it a sofa worth springing for.



One Night Stand by Blu Dot

$1,799 / H 30" x W 80" x D 32"/ Available in gray or rust wool blend / bludot.com

Expert Opinion: This has a very playful, stylish look and really distinguishes itself as a piece of furniture that would fit well into a smaller space. I love how it opens like a book, and the fact that a sheet will fit around the whole thing shows a nice attention to detail. The mattress is quite firm, but it's cute and fashion-forward and a real win as a sofa.

What We Think: Forget maneuvering complex accordion folds; all it takes is a single forward flip to turn this convertible piece from seat to sleeper. The durable wool-blend upholstery will hold up to both shedding pets and dinners in front of the TV, and the generous queen size leaves room for couples to get cozy after the set flickers off. ▶

Wallpaper by Geoff McFetridge/Pottok Prints (Shadows of the Paranormal in blue), Courtesy Flavor Paper (Chinatown Toile by Dan Funderburgh)


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American Modern Daybed by Design Within Reach
$2,100 / H 27" x W 75" x D 33.5" / Available in poppy or bayou / dwr.com

Expert Opinion: It's slim and would be easy to move. None of the others can beat this one for being a true design classic. In that regard, it will last forever. However, it's not a real extra bed, and it's not a real comfortable sofa, so it's definitely a piece for the true mid-century-modern aficionado who values its simple purity. This is a nice counterpoint to the other sleepers.

What We Think: It's a beaut. Solid FSC-certified maple legs offer a natural tweak on the traditional hairpin stems of George Nelson's Case Study day bed, the inspiration for this sofa. While converting it would be simple—just lift off the back cushions (upholstered in removable Maharam fabric)—sleeping on the superflat mattress might not be quite so easy on your back. You might find yourself asking: Is it better to look good or to feel good?

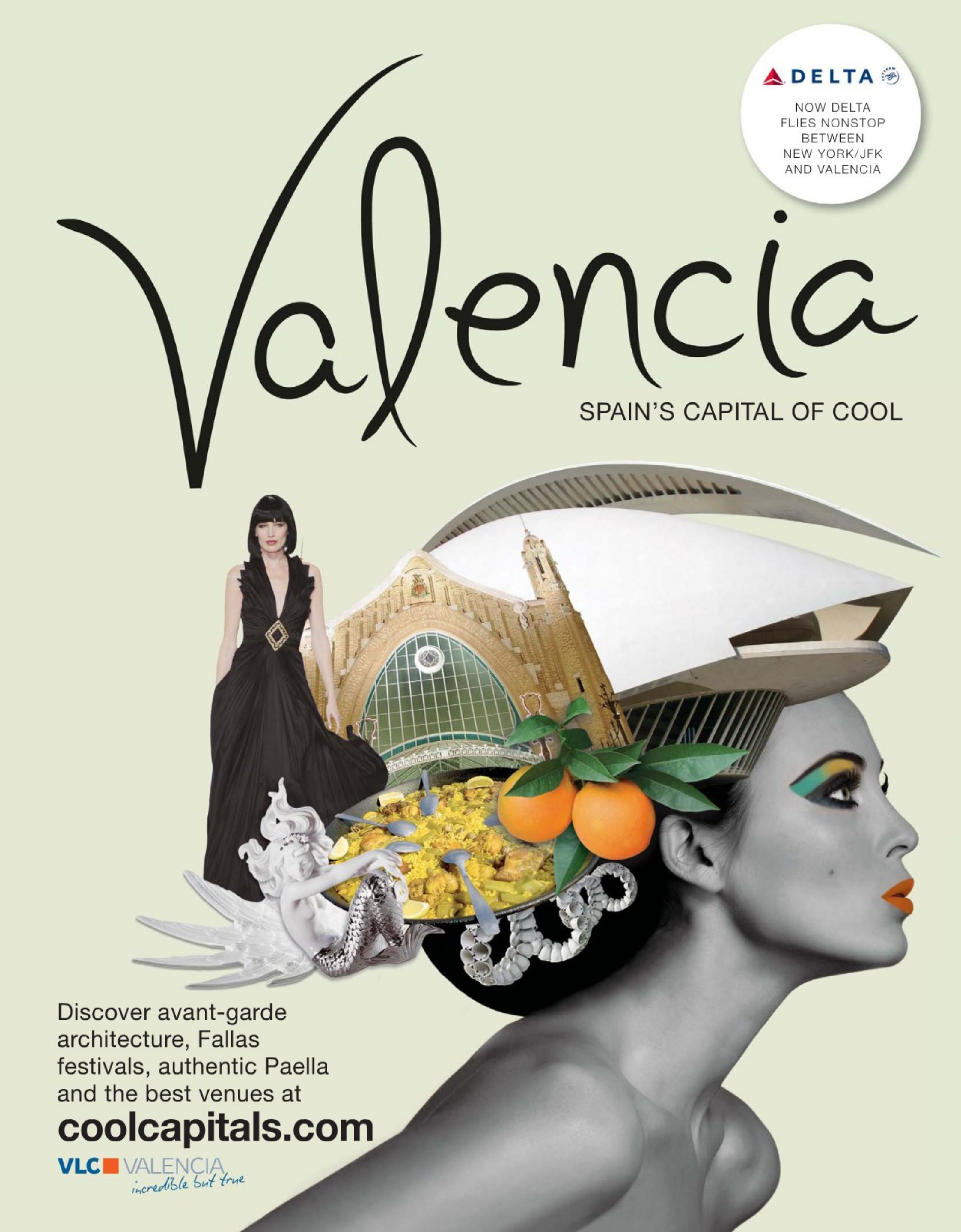
Spaze by BoConcept
From $2,499 / H 34.75" x W 78" x D 36.75" / Available in 74 fabric and leather options / boconcept.us

Expert Opinion: This is a modern take on classic sleeper design: comfortable, a little more conservative, almost masculine, with the substantial feel of a club chair. If I had a store and could stock only one model, it would be this one, because it's serviceable and dependable; it's the evergreen of sofa beds.

What We Think: This generous two-seater is a heavyweight in the sleeper department: traditional in style but comfortable as a couch and bed, and wide enough to ensure that when seated, three's company and not, in fact, a crowd. The extensive color and upholstery options mean matching with your existing decor would be a breeze.



Wallpaper by Mark Giglio (Slime Walls in gray)
Geoff McFetridge/Pottok Prints (California Farmhouse in orange)


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Fascinating Risom

Jens Risom is enjoying his place in the canon of mid-century furniture designers while also distinguishing himself as a great contemporary designer. At 93, he shows no sign of putting down the pencil.

In 2007 Design Within Reach ran an ad campaign that aimed to capitalize on the present design zeitgeist by making use of a 1961 photo spread from *Playboy*. As the Danish-American furniture designer Jens Risom recalls it: "*Playboy* wanted to become high-brow, you know. It never really worked, but they started out with a big series on architects, and then there was one on furniture designers. The center-fold, which normally pictured a lovely, yummy girl, was instead replaced by a picture of six male furniture designers!" Though the enlightened editorial direction at *Playboy* in the early 1960s didn't stick, DWR can attest that the magazine was onto something. For today's design enthusiasts, the desire for mid-century-modern artifacts can be commensurately licentious.

Indeed, this iconic image seems to reify today's conception of mid-century cool, our collective false nostalgia for a time when great design infiltrated the mass market and America was soaking up a glut of talented European émigrés, a handful of whom were pictured in the *Playboy* photo. Of the men shown—George Nelson, Edward Wormley, Eero Saarinen, Harry Bertoia, Charles Eames, and Jens Risom—only Risom is still around. He is 93 and "living comfortably doing nothing" with his wife, Henny, in New Canaan, Connecticut. As he humbly puts it, "There's been a good deal of talk about my work these last couple of years only because I'm the only one left of that early bunch."

One could argue, though, that Jens Risom's spot in the canon of mid-century American design is one marked by displacement. Some of the accolades heaped upon the great designers should rightly have gone to Risom,



Story by Amber Bravo
Portrait by Leslie Williamson

Risom reclines in one of his 600 side chairs for Knoll. Other iterations of this classic line lead to the New Canaan Nature Center adjacent to the Risoms' backyard.


345
347



who, with Hans Knoll, began priming the market for modern design as early as 1941 with the Risom-designed 600 line for Knoll. It included the first Knoll chair ever.

Risom first met Knoll in 1941, two years after arriving in the States. He had been doing freelance design work for Dan Cooper, a well-respected New York interior designer. Cooper had introduced him to many of the great architects and designers working in New York, including Edward Durrell Stone, for whom Risom designed furniture for the Collier's House of Ideas in Rockefeller Center. Eventually Risom split off from Cooper for financial reasons and began subcontracting work out to local cabinet shops throughout the city, selling his designs directly to the architects and designers he'd come to know.

When Risom and Knoll met, Risom says, "He was secretly looking for me, and I was secretly looking for him; you need to have someone to promote the work and to take care of the company, and then someone to take care of design and manufacturing and to find out what you want and should be doing." Risom recalls that the original Knoll chair, one from his classic 600 line, retailed at $21 when it first went on the market in 1941; it now retails for almost $600. He was finally starting to make a name for himself, but Risom's trajectory was thrown off course in 1943, when he was drafted and served in General Patton's Third Army.

"I served for two and a half years—that's a long time," says Risom. "Fortunately, I stayed alive. Because I spoke German and had grown up in Europe, I could be used for a lot of translation. I could also design maps and do layout." During his tour, Risom fell ill with meningitis and was sick in the hospital for months. When he was discharged, he'd been separated from his outfit, which had crossed the channel into Normandy. "I came out of the hospital as a nobody—I didn't even have a name or a number—that's the most degrading thing a person can experience. I got over the channel on my own and got into Normandy, and stayed there for a long time—we had some bad fights there."

When Risom returned to the United States, he found that the world had continued on without him. Knoll had avoided the draft due to a history of tuberculosis and had married Florence Schust, who, according to Risom, "was a brilliant designer but was not as impressed with the Scandinavian wood furniture as she was the metal furniture from Mies and Saarinen." Feeling that, perhaps, it was best for the two collaborators to go their separate ways, Risom started his own company, Jens Risom Design Inc. (JRD), in 1946, which he ran for 25 years.

"I had to decide whether I wanted to continue on with Knoll, and, ultimately, I didn't. He was a little too overwhelming a salesman for me. I don't think he and Schu [Florence] ever ate a meal alone. It was just overwhelming business, and I wasn't really up for it. So they went on with their company and we never really talked or saw each other, which was sad. After Knoll died in 1955, I met Florence once or twice, and she wrote a couple of nice letters, but nothing much more than that."

As the demand for Risom's furniture grew, so did his business. Knoll continued to produce the 600 series after Risom went off on his own—though, starting in 1952, without his name attached so he wouldn't be competing against himself. (Knoll reintroduced the chairs under Risom's name in the late 1990s.) But Risom continued to mine the same aesthetic vein; like the 600, his designs have a stout, earthbound quality to them, with the horizontal lines dominating the vertical ones and a telltale Danish tapered leg.



Photos by Leslie Williamson

One of the few pieces of furniture in the Risom living room (top) not designed by Risom himself is the Egg chair by fellow Dane Arne Jacobsen (far left corner). A painting by Sven Hammershoj graces the mantle. A workstation in Risom's office (bottom) shows evidence that the designer is still very much active; a pile of sketches sits in the basket to the left of the table, and ephemera from early Jens Risom Design marketing material decorate the wall.

JRD positioned itself as one of the few manufacturers in the United States producing well-crafted furniture, but unlike Knoll and Herman Miller, which employed a rotating coterie of design talent, Risom served as JRD's sole creative director. Browsing through a 1955 company catalog shot by the fashion photographer Richard Avedon, one gets a sense of Risom's prolificacy. The collection ranges from basic pieces for the home to executive office furniture. The number of "R" cabinet units alone is staggering. As the marketing material states, "Everything is designed and manufactured by us. Having the planning, engineering, and production all under one roof is very important, we think. It guarantees uniformity and continuity of style."

When Risom was ready to sell his company in 1970, he had about 300 workers and a showroom in every major American city as well as offices in Argentina, Australia, and England. He sold JRD to the Dictaphone Corporation, which was interested in pushing their executive furniture line. However, the president of the company died shortly after the acquisition, and the subsequent management did not share the former's interest in expanding its furniture division. Risom had stayed on to try to help guide the design process, but he eventually left. "I didn't want to be in manufacturing anymore. I really wanted to design only."

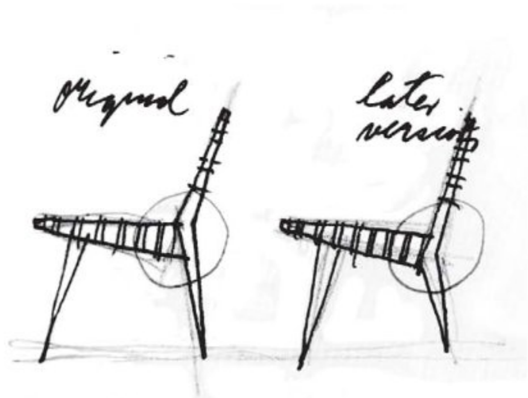
Risom's biggest regret about opening his own design and manufacturing company was that "I was getting outside the architecture/designer groups, and more into the manufacturing group, which was not so bad in the U.S., but in Europe they consider design and architecture to be art and the rest to be trade. So I didn't get to know as many of the good architects and designers as I'd have liked."

Today Risom's desire to create hasn't diminished. His collaborations with manufacturers like DWR Design Studio and Ralph Pucci International have enabled him to focus solely on design. In October, Pucci will release its third collection of Risom's designs—all reproductions of original JRD products. His first collection of 15 to 20 pieces included the Easy chair, the Low armchair, and the U-620 upholstered bench. The new collection will feature a remake of the 1955 U sofa and an executive chair that gained notoriety when Lyndon Johnson used it in the executive office of the White House. "Jens is still very involved," explains Pucci. "He cannot wait to get to the factory—to follow the production all the way through to the end."

Risom's legacy as the last of the great mid-century American furniture designers should not be overshadowed by the fact that he was one of the first. In our haste to understand him as simply a member of an intimate and elite collective, his biography reminds us of his dogged individuality and singular vision. In reality, the *Playboy* photo from 1961 says more about our perception of that time. "People always say, 'This must have been a wonderful opportunity for you designers to get together.' The trouble was, it wasn't! We spent an entire day in a studio in New York being photographed," exclaims Risom. "I didn't know many of them too well. I knew Eames and I knew Saarinen, but it would've been good to have sat around and had a drink, but we never really did get to know each other."

Fortunately, we're still enjoying the opportunity to get to know Risom. ■







Like many of his generation, Risom still sketches by hand (top). Modifications to an earlier design show that he's not one to believe his work is beyond improvement: A sketch (middle) shows a lower axis point for a leg joist in the latest version of his classic 600 line chair. Jens Risom Design offered a wide array of cabinets, which were both functional and stylish with their multicolored paneling. Risom's home (bottom) is well furnished with the fruits of his still-active career. ❶



Jens Risom

1916
Born May 8 in Copenhagen, Denmark.



1935–1938
Along with School for Arts and Crafts classmates Hans Wegner and Børge Mogensen, studies under Kaare Klint, who also headed up the furniture school at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts.

1939
Works as a freelance designer for interior designer Dan Cooper, to whom he was introduced through the Museum of Modern Art. He gets his break with Cooper by designing modern textiles.





1940
Designs furniture for the Edward D. Stone–designed Collier's House of Ideas, a model house built on a terrace at Rockefeller Center.

1946
Launches Jens Risom Design Inc.

1948–1949
JRD launches some of Risom's most iconic designs, including the C-108 armchair, the U-120 sofa, and the oft-aped T-340 low table.



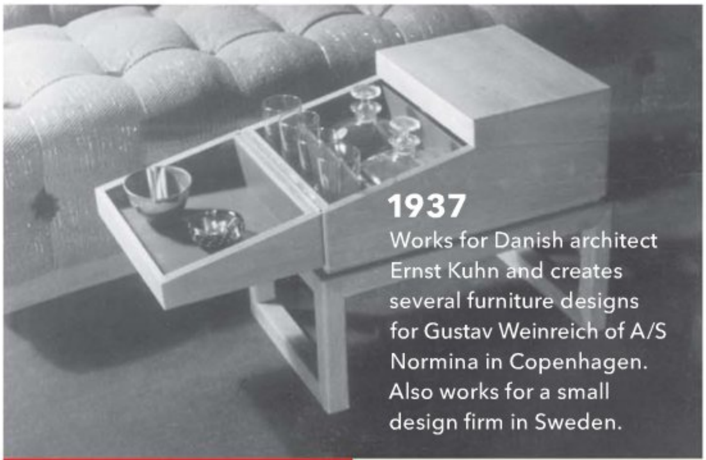
1970
Sells Jens Risom Design Inc.

2006
Receives commission for stool at Philip Johnson's Glass House.



2007–2008
DWR Design Studio approaches Risom to add to its collection from the original Knoll line. Their collaboration produces three updates of pieces he did for the Caribe Hilton in 1949: the Jens bench, armchair, and ottoman.





1937
Works for Danish architect Ernst Kuhn and creates several furniture designs for Gustav Weinreich of A/S Normina in Copenhagen. Also works for a small design firm in Sweden.



1939
Arrives in the United States.

1941
Meets Hans Knoll and travels cross country on a design research trip.



1941
Knoll launches 600 line.



"[Hans Knoll] was secretly looking for me, and I was secretly looking for him; you need to have someone to promote the work and to take care of the company, and then someone to take care of design and manufacturing and to find out what you want and should be doing."

2003
First Jens Risom collection for Ralph Pucci International, which includes reissues of JRD classics.





Fall 2009
Ralph Pucci is scheduled to release its third Jens Risom line, which will feature the classic U sofa, a coffee table, and a classic executive chair.





The 3107 Chair

The most famous photo of Arne Jacobsen's 3107 chair isn't even of a real 3107. The iconic image, taken by Lewis Morley in 1963, depicts British knockout Christine Keeler naked astride a knockoff. The provocative pic propelled the molded-plywood chair to international fame, and sales—which had inched forward at a snail's pace after the chair's 1955 release—skyrocketed. Today, the company has sold nearly seven million Series 7 chairs, including the 3107, the dining-height model, making it Danish furniture manufacturer Fritz Hansen's best-selling family of seats.





Story by Miyoko Ohtake
Photos by Alex Subrizi

At the Fritz Hansen factory in Denmark, a worker inspects the paint finish of a Series 7 chair in front of a wall displaying just some of the wood and color options available.


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1. Prep the Veneer

In the idyllic Danish countryside, 15 miles northwest of Copenhagen, autonomous robots transport pallets of veneer down the aisles of Fritz Hansen's 161,000-square-foot chair factory. Nearby, human workers inspect each of the over 400,000 chairs made here annually, half of which are Series 7 chairs, with the 3107 model at its forefront.

Precut 22-by-33.5-inch sheets of .04-to-.05-inch-thick inner veneer arrive at the factory from mills in France and Germany that have reforestation programs. The outer veneers are ordered from the same mills, but with a custom request passed down directly from Jacobsen. "He made it difficult for us," explains Thomas Touborg, Fritz Hansen's executive vice president of supply chain. "He decided the outside wood should be .03 inches thick and the world standard is .02 inches."

The sheets of outer veneer are cut into 4.5- and 5.5-inch-wide strips, as Jacobsen also specified. They are then run through a machine that glues pieces of alternating widths together by their edges. A thin piece of cotton is adhered to each reconstructed 22-by-33.5-inch sheet for durability.

Next, an employee clamps three hearty handfuls of stacked veneers at a time into a stencil and cuts them into rough versions of their final shapes using a band saw. (The scraps are sold to factories equipped with wood-burning furnaces capable of filtering out the toxins from the glue.)







1

2. Glue and Mold

A worker then places single layers of inner veneer on a conveyor belt that sends them through what looks like a doughnut-glazing machine, coating both sides of the veneer with a white liquid adhesive.

At the other end, the veneers are stacked into nine-sheet piles: a cotton-backed outer layer, four glue-covered sheets sandwiching three dry sheets, and another cotton-backed outer layer on top. These loosely stacked piles are rolled down another conveyor belt where a third man—nearly all of the factory employees are men—places them into the most impressive equipment on the site: the Sennerskov hydraulic form presses.

Here, at 253 degrees Fahrenheit and under 94 tons of pressure, the nine layers of veneer and two sheets of cotton become one piece of molded plywood. After two minutes in the presses, the forms are removed and placed in a drying area, where they sit for five days until the plywood has stabilized.







2

Top: A worker runs two strips of veneer through a machine that glues the edges together. A cotton backing is added before the sheets are cut into their rough shapes.

Bottom: After the veneers are covered in glue and assembled into nine-sheet piles, the hydraulic presses mold the stacks, up to eight at a time, into chair forms.


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3. Cut and Sand

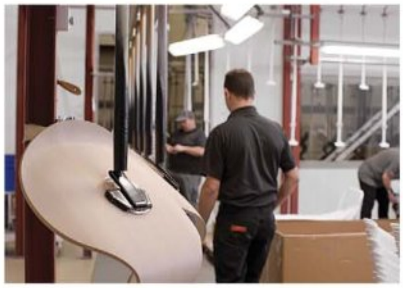
Once the plywood has hardened, a worker wearing sound-suppressing earmuffs places the pieces, three at a time, into the factory's computer numerically controlled (CNC) machine. The milling machine cuts the signature Series 7 silhouette into the molded forms—though by simply changing which pattern is selected, the machine can also create Jacobsen's Ant or Lily chairs from the same pieces of molded plywood.

The newly cut chairs are sent in stacks to skilled craftsmen, who hand-sand and inspect each seat. Quality is carefully controlled, and if there are any imperfections, the chair is cut in half and thrown away. "Few people buy our chairs just to sit on them; they're way too expensive and highly designed," says Jacob Holm, president and CEO of Fritz Hansen. The reason Danes of all classes purchase the pricey product is cultural: "It's very dark in Denmark in the winter so we need to have beautiful homes," Holm says.



In a caged-off area near the craftsmen, a machine attaches plastic discs—onto which the legs are later mounted—to the undersides of the seats using ultraviolet light-cured glue. Five seconds after the discs are stuck on, the machine tries to tear them off with over 1,320 pounds of force. If the disc stays put, it'll stay there for life, Touborg says.





3

4. Paint and Ship

The discs also serve as hooks for hanging the chairs upside down on a conveyor belt that leads them to a glassed-in room. There, a robotic arm paints the curved surfaces with polyurethane paint. Two layers are applied if the customer wants to be able to see the wood grain through the paint, four to five layers for an opaque finish.

After each layer is applied, the chairs spend 2.5 hours in a hardening oven then rest for another 16 hours. When the final coat of paint has dried, workers manually attach the legs to the underside discs. Though Fritz Hansen used to make the chrome legs, it now purchases them from a manufacturer in Sweden. "It's cheaper and of better quality to buy them from specialists," Touborg says.

Eleven days after the process began, the finished chairs—in orders ranging from just one to dozens—are boxed. The labels are addressed to cities around the world from the "Republic of Fritz Hansen." ▮







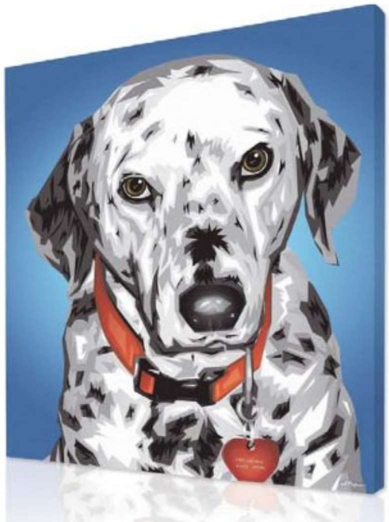
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Top: A CNC machine cuts the Series 7 shape into the molded forms. Workers sand them by hand before another machine attaches plastic discs to the undersides of the seats.

Bottom: A robotic arm paints the hanging chairs for optimum coverage. The legs are attached and one last inspection is done before the chairs are packed and shipped.



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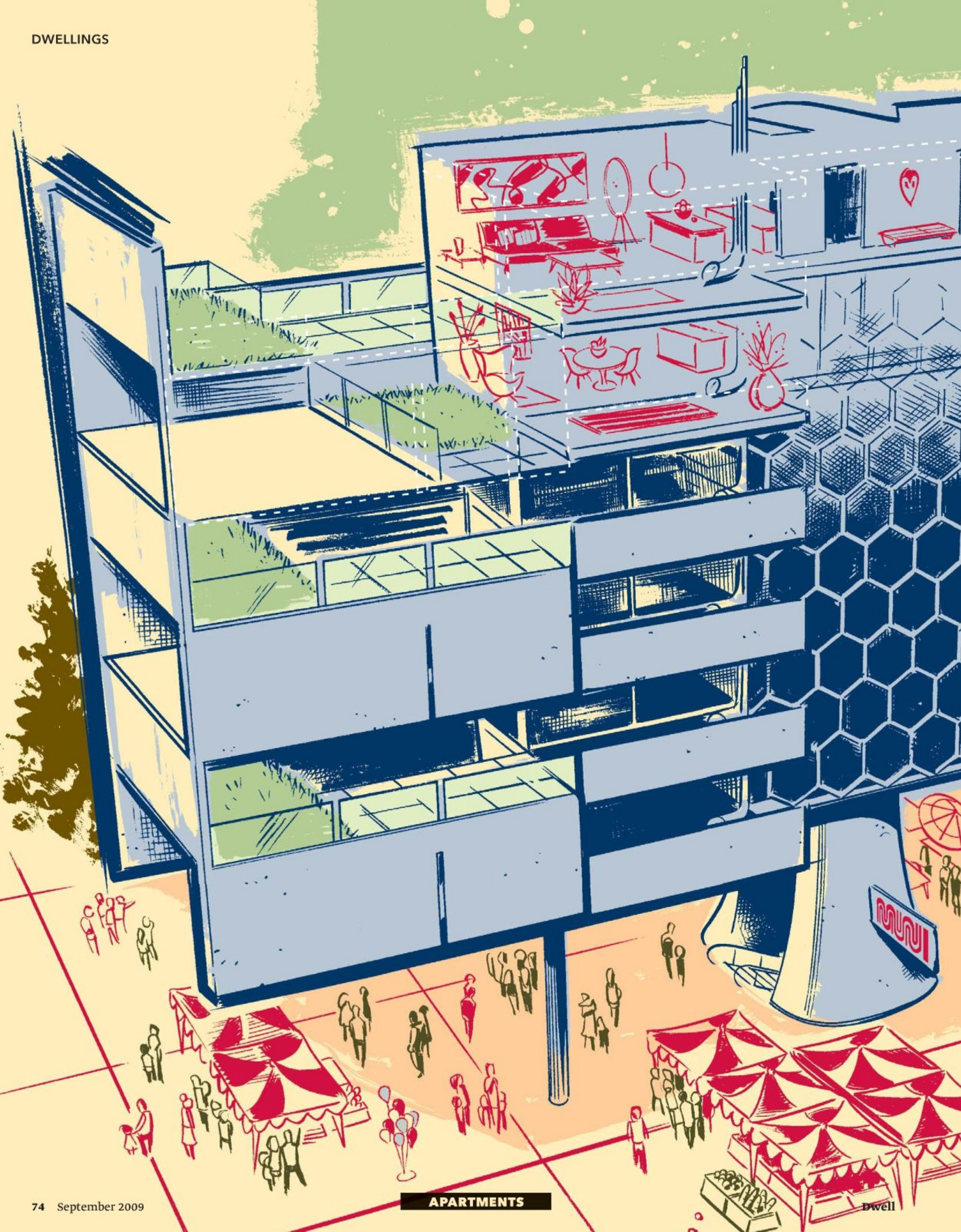
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APARTMENT FANCY

Architectural design by Craig Steely
Illustration by Chris Gardner

ONE MAN'S CEILING IS ANOTHER MAN'S FLOOR

More often than not, choosing an apartment is an exercise in weighing the least of many evils. With so many compromises to be made—from inadequate closet space to noise from the upstairs neighbors—we've often pondered what our ideal apartment would look like. Not content to play mere decorator, we tried on the role of developer and enlisted architect Craig Steely to design us a multiunit abode from the ground up.

WELCOME TO THE ARTHROPOD

Inspired by invertebrates with segmented bodies, our building—the Arthropod—is similarly dictated by clear divisions that function in unison. We ascend to our apartment through a flared concrete monolith that also houses an entry to underground public transportation. Each level is a single 1,450-square-foot unit boasting an almost equal amount of outdoor space—plenty of room for a chicken coop or beehive and a little greenery. Staggered precast-concrete panels and glass terraces ensure that even the bottom unit gets plenty of light. Within the apartment, public spaces are to the left, private to the right. A wood-clad tower on the east elevation houses the bathrooms.

GREEN FOR GOOD

Unlike many apartment buildings, the Arthropod would do its part for the environment. Made with fly-ash concrete, the construction itself utilizes the by-product of coal-fired power plants. A skin of bifacial custom-shaped solar panels covers the southern facade and contributes to the building's power needs. An extensive graywater system provides water for the grounds and gardens. The thermal mass of the concrete and orientation of the building make for excellent passive solar design, keeping heating and cooling needs at bay.

COME ONE, COME ALL

With the building situated at a transit hub, we found it important to lift it off the ground, essentially giving the site back to the public. We imagine coming home, hunting for dusty books and records at the flea market, and buying our vegetables and meats fresh from local vendors on a daily basis.

CREATIVE TYPES

When graphic designers Jeanette and Mike Abbink left behind their loft in San Francisco—with collected ephemera, a voluminous library, and a parcel of paintings in tow—they didn't know where they would land in the Big Apple. One renovation and one Welsh terrier later, they're back on track in Brooklyn.



Story by Karrie Jacobs
Photos by Dean Kaufman

Project: Abbink Residence
Architect: Architecture + Construction
Location: Brooklyn, New York



Jeanette and Mike Abbink's 1925 apartment building is a block from Brooklyn's Prospect Park (opposite), where their Welsh terrier, Stig, and his Boston terrier pal, Meow, are regulars. Up on the ninth floor, their sober Neo sofa and chaise from DWR and classic Florence Knoll credenza are contrasted by more exotic accessories like Patrick Townsend's Orbit chandelier and an offbeat white vase from Creative Growth, an Oakland, California, workshop for disabled artists.



A decade ago, Jeanette Abbink (then Hodge) lived in a teeny-tiny San Francisco apartment crammed with her collection of eggbeaters, over a hundred of them—"an extension," she says, "of my fascination with eggs." Most people don't regard eggbeaters as aesthetic objects, but Jeanette could see that they are actually elegant little machines, like something out of a Leonardo da Vinci sketchbook. One day Jeanette, who was Dwell's founding creative director, judged a design competition where she met fellow juror Mike Abbink, who was, at the time, deeply immersed in designing a beautifully clear yet eccentric font called FF Kievit. They soon ran off to City Hall to get married, and eventually they packed up their eggbeaters and typography books and moved to a characteristically open and sunny, 1,500-square-foot loft apartment by leading Bay Area designer Stanley Saitowitz.

In 2005, Mike took a job in the New York office of an international branding firm (today he works for a similar firm called Saffron), and Jeanette signed up to design a sports-magazine prototype for the *New York Times*. (She has since started her own company, Rational Beauty.) Professionally, they were set. All they had to do was find a place to live. The Abbinks had a pretty good idea that in New York, they wouldn't be able to afford the same quantity of square footage or quality of sunlight. And buying something modern on their budget didn't even seem plausible. "We thought we would get into a brownstone, maybe take a whole floor," Mike recalls. But they weren't psychologically prepared for the way that old New York apartments look. They didn't quite get that when you go to look at a place in a 1925 relic like The President—the stately Brooklyn apartment house in which they now live—you have to see through geologic layers of past lives. "When we first came in it just looked so tired," says Jeanette.

Architect Stephen Cassell, of Architecture Research Office, a friend of theirs, set the couple straight. He looked at photos and floor plans of 9C and he knew to ignore its sad, gray patina. "These old buildings always have interesting layouts that work well," Cassell notes, "and have a certain elegance to them—underneath the 43 layers of paint." He also fixed them up with an architect, a former ARO employee named Joshua Pulver who had started his own company, sensibly named Architecture + Construction. Cassell says that Pulver "really resolves details well" and that "you can't have a more exacting client than a type designer" like Mike.

The advantage for the Abbinks was that Pulver, who lived right in the neighborhood, would double as architect and contractor, allowing him to closely supervise construction and control costs. And for Pulver, whose young firm hadn't established itself yet, the appeal of working with the Abbinks ▸

A second bedroom was converted into a home office/dining room. A Dieter Rams 606 Universal Shelving System (below and opposite) lines the wall. The "Ziggy Diamond" wallpaper (behind the surreal Erle Loran painting) comes from Flavor Paper, a New Orleans firm that prints wall coverings to order, and the ingenious folding table is by Swedish designer Bruno Matthson.



was obvious: Their passion for minimalist design matched his. "I jumped at the opportunity," recalls the architect.

What transpired over a six-month period was a complex surgical procedure intended to transform a dreary prewar apartment into a modern loft. "We built models and did perspective drawings," says Pulver, "and lots of elevations." Ultimately, the Abbinks and their architect settled on four major design moves.

First, they decided to eliminate the wall that divided the second bedroom from the living room to create an open living/dining/work space. "We had a version that we wanted," Jeanette explains, "like a glass cube inside the apartment. But we couldn't afford it." Instead, they united the two rooms with an opening so traditional looking it could easily have been there since 1925. Still, even the double-size room proved too snug for their extralong 1971 Charles Pfister–designed Knoll sofa. They sold it on Craigslist and replaced it with a matching two-seater and chaise from Design Within Reach designed by Danish-born Canadian designer Niels Bendtsen. Perhaps the most eye-catching item in the room is the light fixture that hangs over their Swedish dining table. Patrick Townsend, the Queens-based designer of the Orbit chandelier, likens his wiry creation to a suspension bridge, but it looks suspiciously like a giant eggbeater.

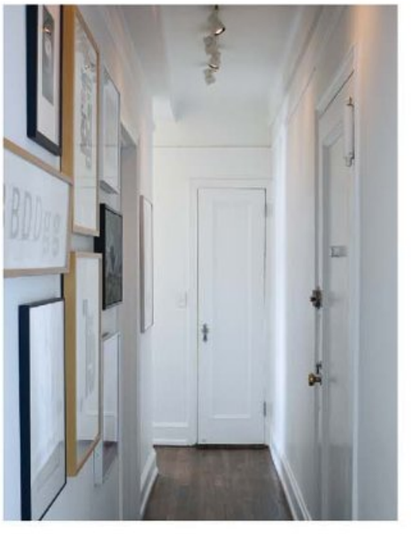
The second big move was to transform the typically skinny New York apartment kitchen with the kind of high-end Italian system you'd normally find sitting in the middle of 5,000 square feet of open plan. "In California we lived near the Arclinea showroom," explains Jeanette. "When I was walking to work I would think, Oh, it's so beautiful. I really like the finish, and I like Antonio Citterio, the designer." Fortunately, she had made friends with the San Francisco Arclinea representative, and he worked with Pulver to shoehorn Citterio's Convivium system into a very tight space. The result is impressive. There's a built-in double-decker Miele oven (and a three-tier Miele steamer, good for vegetables and indoor clambakes) and a Sub-Zero refrigerator and freezer under the counter, distributed into four unobtrusive drawers.

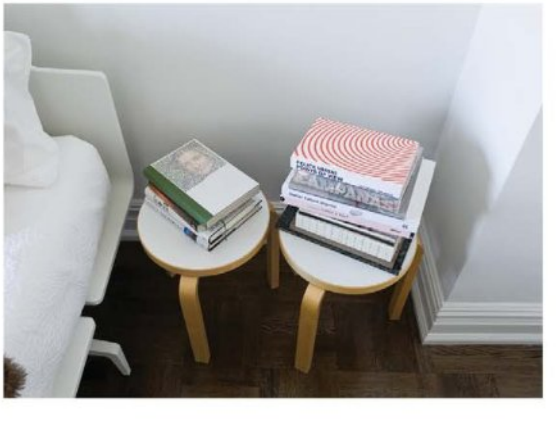
Mike points out that when you get rid of the bulky traditional refrigerator, even a narrow apartment kitchen opens up and yields unexpected amounts of storage space. He happily demonstrates that underneath the five-burner Gaggenau cooktop are drawers holding lots of pots and pans. (For a few moments, all four of us—clients, architect, reporter—stand in the kitchen, pulling white lacquer-coated drawers out and gliding them back in, transfixed by a motion so silky that you'd imagine the Italians have been fine-tuning it since Nervi. Then we hear a crunching noise from the living room and discover that Stig, the Abbinks' hyperkinetic Welsh terrier, is devouring the bowl of smoked almonds that was sitting so prettily on the extralow marble-topped Zanotta coffee table.) ▶





The Abbinks' apartment is a study in details, from the stainless steel kitchen countertop to the clever Arclinea rail system that holds their salt and pepper, to the Skinny coffee table (perfect for unauthorized doggy dining) by Prospero Rasulo for Zanotta and Jeanette's growing collection of Stig Lindberg and Bjorn Wiinblad ceramics.





A narrow hallway, typical of prewar apartments, doubles as an art gallery lined with woodcut type studies by graphic artist Jack Stauffacher, type sketches by Erik Spiekermann, and photography by Catherine Opie and Catherine Ledner. In the bedroom Aalto stools stand in for night tables next to the Legnoletto bed by Alfredo Häberli for Alias.



The kitchen is a miracle of efficiency, with Antonio Citterio's Convivium system for Arclinea shoehorned into a tight galley layout. The built-in Miele oven has storage above, and the Sub-Zero drawers are far less bulky than a freestanding refrigerator. The Carrara marble countertop and backsplash were custom cut by Brooklyn's Acme Marble Co.



In the bathroom (opposite), the gray Carrara walls are offset by bright tulip-patterned wallpaper, circa 1970, from Secondhand Rose in Tribeca. The toilet is a Philippe Starck "jet action" model from Duravit. Beneath the windows in the living room (above) and the bedroom (opposite) is the clever built-in radiator screen/storage system designed by Joshua Pulver and Mike. The bedroom dresser is vintage Russel Wright.

Design move number three was to maximize the square footage of a typically compressed New York City bathroom, without benefit of any additional space. "We gave Josh a simple brief," says Mike. "Minimal. The least amount of detail and materials possible." "We didn't even want to have a shower door," Jeanette adds. And since one of the kitchen counters was going to be smoke-colored Carrara marble, the Abbinks decided to continue the theme in the bathroom.

"The initial idea was that everything was carved Carrara," Pulver explains. Sort of like a Roman bath. "Everything would be big, chunky, simple volumes." Ultimately they had to buy, not carve, a sink, a tub, and a toilet. "There's a little bit of diversion from the pure, original idea," Pulver acknowledges. While a total marble environment sounds extravagant, Pulver argues that it saved labor costs. "It's a really economical way to do it because there's no preparation. We gutted the bathroom and just laid the slabs. So, in the course of two days it went from a disaster area to a finished bathroom."

The fourth move, one you might not notice unless someone points it out, reveals the influence of the typeface designer who, after all, is the kind of guy who can spend months on the negative space inside a lowercase "g." Pulver and Mike worked together to devise a combination radiator cover and storage system that runs below the windows, from room to room, throughout the apartment. It's like a *basso continuo* running through a baroque concerto or, more to the point, a line underscoring the Abbinks' open view of south Brooklyn and the Manhattan skyline beyond. The screen has a slotted pattern, which Mike and Pulver painstakingly drafted—"We looked at 30 different variations," Pulver recalls—and Pulver CNC milled into wood panels. The storage system is topped with a wide Carrara ledge, perfect for displaying Jeanette's beguiling collection of eBay finds—not eggbeaters (they're mostly in storage) but ceramics by Bjorn Wiinblad and Stig Lindberg, the whimsical Swedish modernist for whom the family dog is named.

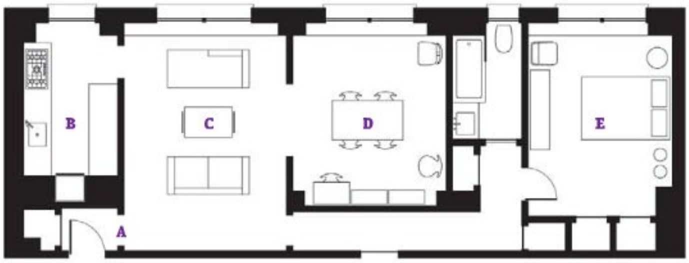
All told, the Abbink apartment is a study in the power and limitations of renovation. It is, of course, impossible to squeeze the openness of a Saitowitz loft out of a traditional prewar layout, but you can make enough strategic changes that you wind up with an airy, uncluttered aesthetic. However, the dominant flavor of the place comes not from its architecture, old or new, or even from its carefully chosen furnishings, but from the Abbinks' artwork and collectibles—from abstract paintings to iconic graphic designs. The apartment is the carefully curated product of two remarkable pairs of eyes. Really, what the Abbinks have done is added their own unique geology to the densely layered history of a New York apartment.





Abbink Residence
Floor Plan

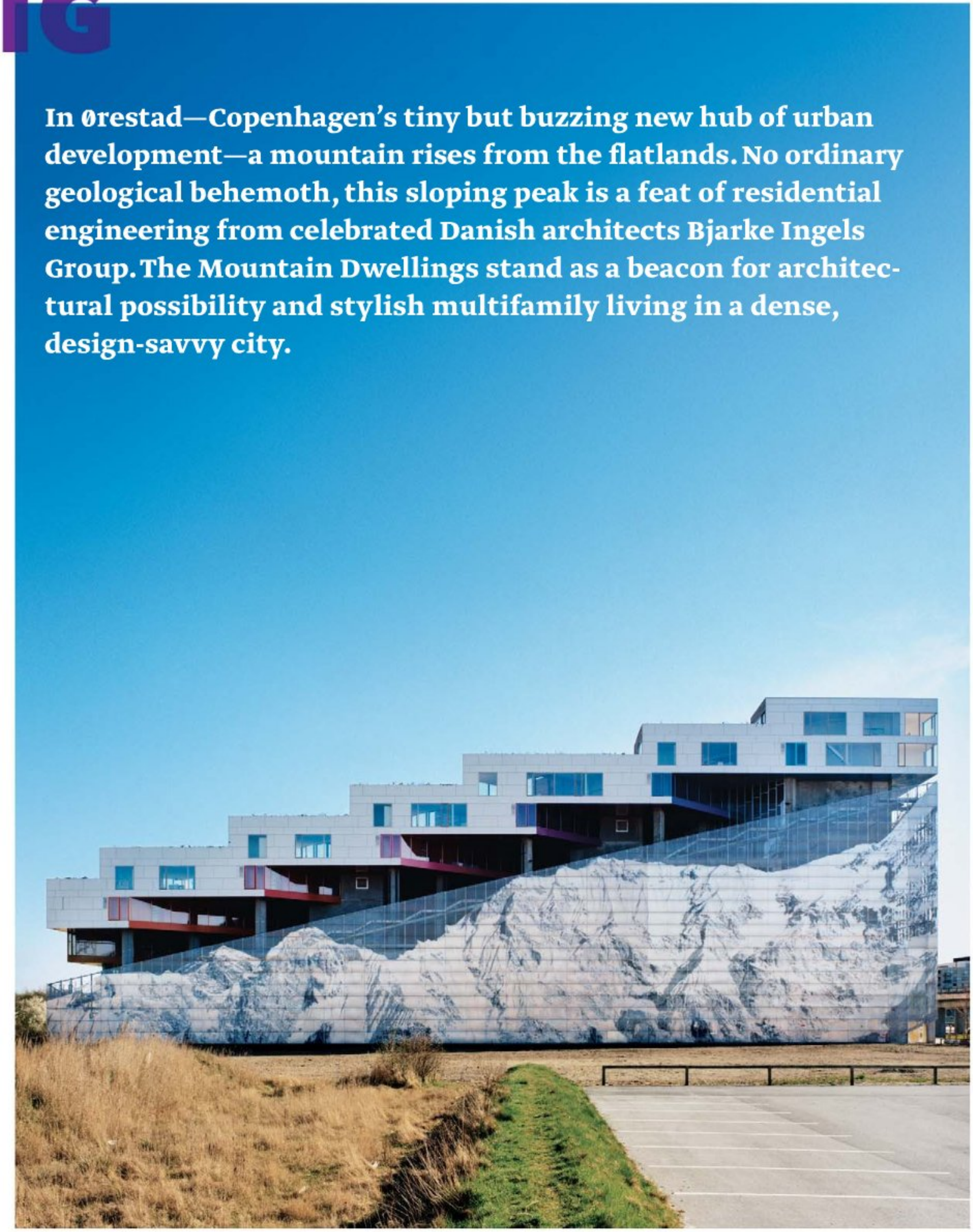
A Entry
B Kitchen
C Living Room
D Dining Room/Study
E Bedroom





THINK BIG

In Ørestad—Copenhagen's tiny but buzzing new hub of urban development—a mountain rises from the flatlands. No ordinary geological behemoth, this sloping peak is a feat of residential engineering from celebrated Danish architects Bjarke Ingels Group. The Mountain Dwellings stand as a beacon for architectural possibility and stylish multifamily living in a dense, design-savvy city.



Story by Sally McGrane
Photos by Jens Passoth

Project: Mountain Dwellings
Architect: Bjarke Ingels Group
Location: Copenhagen, Denmark

@ Extended slideshow at dwell.com/magazine



Every apartment has a terrace measuring around 1,000 square feet, with both private and semipublic spaces. "The cool thing about a garden is it's yours," says architect Bjarke Ingels. "If you're on the wooden part, you can suntan in your bikini bottom or go without pants." If, however, you walk out onto the artificial turf, you can see what's going on with your neighbors (and they can see you).


APT. 402
55
Bjerget





Wearing a dark pinstriped suit with a T-shirt and Adidas tennis shoes, architect David Zahle stands on the wooden terrace of the two-bedroom apartment he shares with his wife and two young children in the Mountain Dwellings, the radical new apartment complex in Copenhagen by Bjarke Ingels Group (or BIG as they are more commonly known). Zahle points to the apartment building across the way, the VM Houses, also built by BIG, where a woman is vacuuming in her underwear behind a wall of glass on one of the upper stories. Grinning, Zahle, who works at BIG, then motions to the three-foot-wide planter box that blocks the view from here into the terrace belonging to his downstairs neighbor. "This," he says, summing up one of the key differences between the socially experimental VM Houses next door, where he used to live, and the structurally experimental Mountain Dwellings, where he moved as soon as the building was completed, "is so I can't see my neighbor's wife naked."

While the VM Houses, which were completed in 2005, played with ideas of openness, the Mountain Dwellings were designed to offer privacy to residents. "We thought the cool thing about a garden is it's your garden, where you can suntan in your bikini bottom," says Bjarke Ingels, the rising star of Danish architecture, who himself lives in the VM Houses. But privacy is one of few things that is conventional about the Mountain Dwellings. Completed in 2008, the building is the second of BIG's three projects in Ørestad, a new neighborhood in Copenhagen where development is attracting many new inhabitants.

The Mountain Dwellings, for which Zahle did some drawings in early stages, was a response to a zoning problem: The lot, which runs along the Metro tracks, had to have 215,000 square feet of parking and 108,000 square feet of housing. The original city plans consisted of a residential tower dwarfed by a separate parking garage. "It was a problem," says Zahle. "The apartments were going to have Metro noise on one side and the parking lot on the other. So when you wanted to go on your balcony at five o'clock to barbecue, there would be all the rush-hour dust and pollution from the cars."

The solution? "We decided to use the cars to lift up the housing units," says Zahle. "We call it 'architectural alchemy'—combining elements to turn architectural lead into gold."

The result does looks like a mountain—hence the building's name and the inspiration for the mural of Mount Everest that adorns the 82-foot-high facade. In his Copenhagen office, the 34-year-old Ingels elaborates on the route taken to arrive at the unusual shape, concept, and facade of the eye-catching building. Describing his philosophy of "yes is more," Ingels says he tried to come up with a solution that pleased everybody—and everything. "Instead of seeing cars as a problem that you need to hide below the ground," says Ingels, "why not give them what they want?" ▸

Over the garage (opposite top), each unit sits on its own level, with nothing directly above or below—in effect making every apartment a penthouse. In the 500-space parking structure (opposite left) Victor Ash painted murals of wild animals on piles of trashed cars. The halls connecting the garage to the residences (opposite right) are covered in brightly painted metal—a treatment associated with cars, not buildings. David Zahle, his wife Maria Rich, and their children (below) moved into the Mountain Dwellings in 2008. Rich's father made their dining table in the '70s, and her mother made the wall-mounted shag rug during the same period.





Zahle and Rich's home has just one bedroom, so they put up a wall (hidden by the bookshelf) and sliding door to create a master bedroom at one end of the glass-walled main room. Thanks to modern insulation technology, "there is almost no difference between outside and inside," says Zahle.



Cars, he argues, should be near the ground, sheltered, and kept away from direct sunlight. Housing, on the other hand, "wants" southern exposure, fresh air, and a view. "Gradually, when you mix cars and housing—if they could move themselves—they'd gravitate to this form, with the parking in the deep space in the north and the houses on top, facing south."

Once the parking found its way to the building's northern base, abutting the Metro tracks, the alchemy kicked in. The multilevel parking garage could in fact act as a kind of sloping podium for the housing units—80 in all—that step down the building's southern face in a freestanding staircase formation made structurally feasible by the base of the parking lot. Because each floor of apartments stands alone, with no one directly above, each of the units is, technically speaking, a penthouse, with a large private terrace and suburbanesque garden space.

Not content to just build a regular parking lot behind the Himalayan facade, Ingels created a high-ceilinged, five-story, concrete-and-steel "car cathedral—to celebrate car culture." Throughout, the French artist Victor Ash varnished the concrete walls with gray-on-gray murals of wild animals—a wolf, a moose—standing atop piles of wrecked automobiles. "I like [the murals] because they show that everything we do is part of the ecosystem," says Ingels, who found Ash through a friend who owns an art gallery in Copenhagen's meat-packing district. "They make the point that there's no real distinction between us and nature. Cars are a man-made part of nature, like elephant dung is an elephant-made part of nature."

Overhead, the underside of each level of apartments (what Ingels calls "the sixth facade") is covered in brightly painted aluminum that moves, symbolically, from earth to sky: green, yellow, orange, dark orange, hot pink, purple, bright blue. "Buildings are never brightly colored," says Ingels, explaining the thinking behind this stepladder rainbow, "but cars often are."

As there's no lobby, the building is always entered through the garage. Residents can drive up to their floor, then cross a suspended industrial metal-clad concrete gangplank to reach their hallway. If they arrive by foot or bicycle, they enter by walking up a set of metal stairs that climb from south to north over the parking lot or riding Denmark's only funicular-style inclined elevator (imported from Switzerland, naturally).

"It's an urban dystopia," says Zahle, adding that he likes the way that the parking lot "emphasizes the brutality of mixing two such alien objects [parking and living] in one function."

The car cathedral, which Ingels sees as "pragmatically utopic," is inescapable—and unquestionably cool. So cool, points out Zahle, that Copenhagen's annual electronic-music festival, Distortion, was held in the garage just before he moved in.

A public staircase along the outside means anyone can "climb" the mountain, and a local mountain ▸





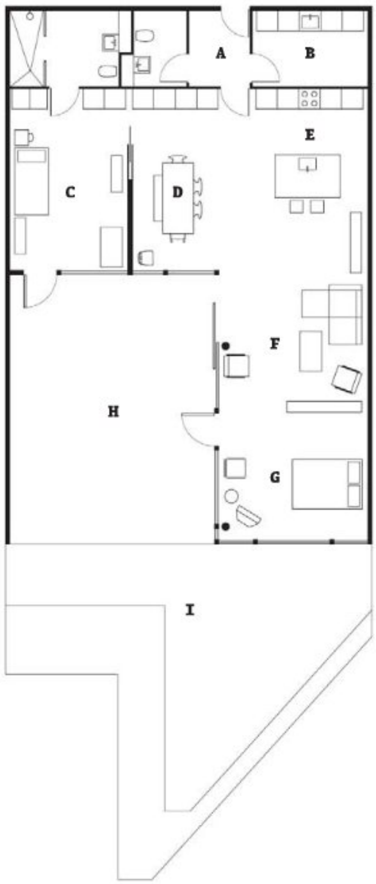
climbers' association will soon install a climbing wall at the back of the building, near the peak.

Each level's hallway is enclosed and encased in painted metal both on the interior and exterior, colored according to floor. Inside, these are intense spaces, the colors almost electric. Walking down the hallways feels like being inside a long, mood-enhancing tanning booth. Once through the front door of an apartment, however, the mood changes completely. Airy, open, light-filled apartments with walls of glass look out onto 970-square-foot terraces edged in artificial turf. White walls, oak floors, and wooden window panes exude a calm, Danish-modern vibe. "It's a schizophrenic sensibility," says Ingels. "The south is purely organic, and the north is strictly contemporary."

Zahle says the apartments, whose service areas are in the back to dampen noise from the parking lot, are quiet. "It's ten minutes from the city center," says Zahle, "but you're completely alone with the sky and with nature. It's not really like an apartment, it's more like a summer house on a hillside."

Ingels's belief in man-made objects as a part of nature has been brought to bear in the Mountain Dwellings themselves. Composed of the very same materials that form your average eyesore, the building transcends its components to evoke an alpine idyll. As urbanization continues apace, the ability of innovative design not only to mimic nature, but to manifest it, is no small accomplishment.

An expansive terrace (opposite) and walls of glass unite indoor and outdoor space. A stainless steel kitchen island (above left), designed by BIG, is lit by Cecilie Manz's Caravaggio lights. The kids occupy the bedroom (above right), which is small but generously daylit. Of the modest overall size of the place, Zahle says the layout belies the square footage, adding that his kids love it because they can run around outside in the summer.



Zahle Residence Floor Plan

A Entry
B Laundry
C Bedroom
D Dining Area
E Kitchen
F Living Area
G Master Bedroom
H Patio
I Deck


R.O.O.M



Casey Patten and David Mazza (left and right, opposite) are most frequently found behind the counter of their Washington, DC, deli, Taylor Gourmet. When the friends and business partners aren't slaving over chicken cutlets or slicing prosciutto, they take in the urban views from their respective apartments above the restaurant.

HOAGIES' HEROES

Best friends since middle school, Casey Patten and David Mazza have a passion for their up-and-coming slice of Washington, DC, matched only by their commitment to making you the best damn sandwich in the District.



Story by Aaron Britt
Photos by João Canziani

Project: Taylor Gourmet Deli/Residences
Architect (Deli): Grupo 7 Architects
Location: Washington, DC



A midday stroll down H Street NE between North Capitol and 15th Street NE in Washington, DC, offers none of the grand vistas, marble monuments, nor reminders of a bubbling bureaucracy busily tending to the nation. If anything, it's a 15-block essay on how the District of Columbia has failed so many of its citizens, but it also offers up a challenge to see how the near Northeast quadrant of the city could be as vital as the tonier environs in Northwest.

As you get to H and 11th NE, amid run-down dollar stores, abandoned real estate, and storefronts offering payday loans, you start to see a handful of new, hipper businesses, a theater, the odd gallery. They're still dots, not yet a web, but one senses—and knows for sure on bustling Saturday nights—that something is slowly changing. H Street NE used to be a thriving commercial district, but the riots that followed the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968 ravaged the neighborhood, plunging it into 40 years of neglect. Daytime street life is still dominated by people turned out of local halfway homes for the day, but by lunchtime more and more folks who live outside the neighborhood, and the growing crop of scruffy twentysomethings who do, arrive for a meal at the new Belgian restaurant, coffee at the funky cafe, or hoagies at Taylor Gourmet.

David Mazza, 30, and Casey Patten, 28, best friends since middle school, opened Taylor Gourmet, a Philadelphia-style deli and gourmet Italian market, at the end of 2008, in the ground floor of a three-story brick building at 1116 H Street NE. In the salad days before the '68 riots, 1116 had housed a bakery, but since then it has played home to a hair salon, a crack house, and, for a time, just the rats and pigeons.

Mazza and Patten, who both moved to DC after graduating from Penn State, bounced around the city for a couple years, working in real estate and construction, before they bought the building in late 2007. They already co-owned another property and knew they were good business partners, but for what was next they'd be more than just officemates; they'd have to be good neighbors.

"We really had no architectural background whatsoever," Mazza says, "but design is really important to us." With this not-insignificant obstacle and a perilously limited budget, Mazza and Patten set about making the second and third floors of their new purchase into a pair of 850-square-foot, three-room bachelor pads. Though Mazza had been on the real estate end of Washington's recent condo boom and had a couple small renovations and a condo conversion under his belt, he still describes the pair's renovation skills as being more oriented toward taking things apart than putting them back together. "I could demo all day. I really came to love it," Patten says, as Mazza chimes in with the good-natured assessment: "Yeah, man. You're really good at it." ▶

Patten's apartment is on the second floor, and though the layouts of the two residences are nearly identical, Patten's initials on a support column (below) clearly mark this space as his own. His living room (opposite) gets all its light from windows facing south onto H Street NE.



Patten Residence
Second Floor Plan
A Living/Kitchen Area
B Bedroom
C Entry
D Office

Mazza Residence
Third Floor Plan
A Living/Kitchen Area
B Bedroom
C Entry





Faced with a pair of residential units that made no sense—doors from the corridor led immediately onto other doors and hallways to nowhere—Mazza and Patten made quick use of their demolition prowess. Peeling back plaster and drywall they unearthed beautiful brick walls. They opted to leave them exposed, letting light from the street and a wall of rough-hewn red brick warm up the large living rooms and kitchens. "We wanted a kind of rustic, industrial feel up here," Mazza says. "Then we repeated the same palette of materials down in the deli," chimes in Patten. "It's just our taste, really. It's what we live with, it's what we work in."

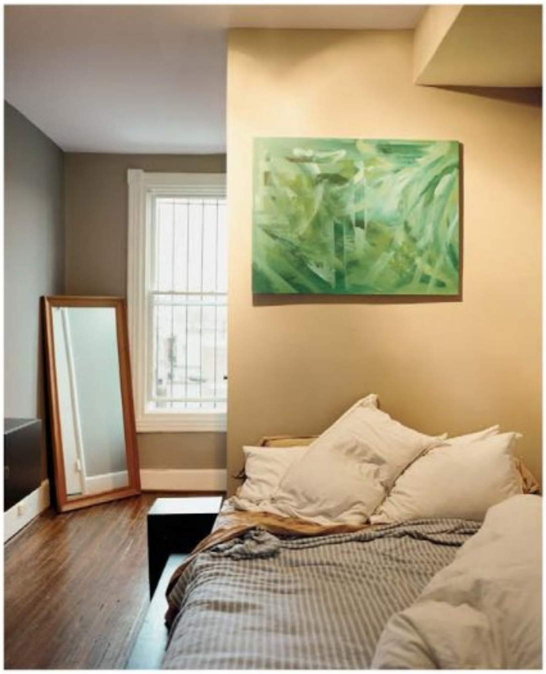
The apartments are mostly identical, with a small bathroom in the back and reasonably sized bedroom in between that and the living space and kitchen. Perhaps the most striking features upon walking into one of the apartments, after registering the modest size and that telltale mark of bachelordom, the large flat-screen TV, are the clean green drawers beneath the sink. Mazza, when questioned about their provenance, sheepishly replies, "Can I say Ikea?"

Naturally, he can. What's even more impressive is how the pair essentially took an off-the-shelf Ikea system and customized it. "We liked the green facing on the drawers, but thought the whole system wasn't very cool," Mazza says. "But we saw these stainless steel tables and thought maybe they could fit over the tops," Patten pipes up. "So we got out the tape measures," Mazza finishes. The result is a sleek bank of green cabinets with the stainless steel counters running over the top. They cut a space for a drop-in sink, and voilà, that great architectural oxymoron: an off-the-rack custom kitchen. The pair is thrilled with the results. Even the architects they hired to work at the deli from Grupo 7 were impressed: "They said, 'These cabinets are insane. How do we get them?'" Mazza recalls.

There does appear to be one surprising omission in Mazza's and Patten's otherwise homey apartments, particularly considering their professed love of cooking and the fact that they work in the restaurant business: Neither have dining tables. Each make a half nod to the coffee table to describe their dining styles, or suggest that they've got plenty of tables down in the deli. Does that mean after whipping up a chicken cacciatore they each descend the stairs to eat in a vacant delicatessen? "Well, no, I guess not," they stammer, then more forcefully point to the coffee table, and then to the television. Bachelors indeed.

The same aesthetics and cost consciousness that color the apartments above is in evidence down below. "We said to Grupo 7, 'We need you to use the cheapest materials possible, but in a really cool way,'" Mazza recounts. Chain-link fence poles hold up the racks of food in the market and support the grid of lights on the ceiling, and a fixture handmade by ▸

Mazza (opposite) and Patten both used off-the-shelf Ikea cabinets in their kitchens. They customized them by raising them up a few inches and dropping a sink into a store-bought table, which serves as the countertop. Mazza's bedroom (bottom left) gets a bit of light from a window that overlooks the deli's back patio. In the living room (bottom right) his sofa is from Crate and Barrel.





The roll-up doors on the facade give Taylor Gourmet an outdoor feel while the wooden walls made of recycled shipping pallets offer a textured, rustic feel. Patten fashions more than just sandwiches; the light fixture in the back of the restaurant (opposite top) is his own design of lightbulbs and vacuum tubes. The market's shelves are lined with all manner of Italian goodies, and the lighting grid on the ceiling (opposite bottom right), made of chain-link fence posts, is a nod to the grids common in Italian delis.

Patten that looks like a bouquet of incandescent bulbs hangs over a back table. The parade of humble materials continues as deconstructed shipping pallets (the pair traipsed around town looking for discards) treated with soy sealant line the walls and counter, giving texture and depth to the surfaces, a subtle and reverent nod to the materials that help get the food to the shop.

Patten and Mazza, fresh from renovating their apartments, knew that a sustainable future for Taylor Gourmet, and H Street itself, would need sustainable design. They called in Adrienne Spahr of Green Living Consulting during the construction process to help assess how they can keep their carbon footprint small. "We didn't really know much about going green," Mazza says, "Adrienne really helped us out."

Recycled wood, steel, and insulation; natural sealants; low-VOC paints; and the renovation of an existing building were all critical elements of keeping Taylor Gourmet as sustainable as possible. Elbow grease, a strong knowledge of area subcontractors, and Mazza's keen head for business kept them under budget. Though one of the greatest financial boons and strongest incentives to keep plugging away came from an unexpected place: the city.

Washington was handing out chunks of cash to local businesses to jumpstart private investment on H Street NE as part of its $95 million Great Streets







Initiative. Mazza and Patten applied for a grant to fund the roll-up garage door that opens onto the street, allowing patrons to dine en plein air despite zoning restrictions on sidewalk tables. They received $20,000, and though it didn't cover the full cost of the door, it went miles in differentiating the deli's facade from the surrounding block.

Having the deli up and running, hustling catering orders out each morning before doors open at noon, Mazza and Patten are happy at their work. Their affection for their neighborhood, their homes, their nascent business, and each other is patently clear. "To be able to take a building and just turn it around, man, that feels so good," Mazza says. And though the space upstairs is limited, he doesn't seem to mind. "I'm going to be here for a while," he says. "I love it."

Businesses and homeowners like Mazza and Patten are starting to wake up to the possibilities the neighborhood holds, but a true renaissance has yet to take root. Early indicators are promising, though a further economic downturn or loss of mettle in City Hall could keep the neighborhood from tipping into prosperity. Mazza remains hopeful, pointing out yet another sign that things are turning around: "Zipcars. When you see Zipcars you know the 'hood is changing." It's a canny assessment from precisely what the neighborhood needs, a scrappy pair of residents and businessmen deeply committed to the next phase of life on H Street NE.







An Introduction to Product Design



We're surrounded by legions of products, most of them unremittingly lousy. What separates the good from the bad from the ugly? Take out your well-designed pencils for Product Design 101.

Last night I went to a corner liquor store to buy some toothpaste. While the beer and candy aisles of the store were heavily trafficked, the back "household goods" section was not. And that's where I was, searching for Crest among reams of dust-covered carbon paper for typewriters nobody now uses; scissors made in China with finger holes too small for toddlers; and paper-thin polyester argyle dress socks hanging like petrified bats from plastic hooks. All these products were uncomfortable, ugly, hard to use, and obsolete—so useless that nobody had ever wanted them. And since they rolled off the production lines 10, even 20, years ago, they have rotted beneath the flickering fluorescent lights of this liquor store and thousands like it, grimy unmarked gravestones in the cemetery of bad product design.

I left the store empty-handed and wondered why a free market society would produce so many things that are so wholly crappy. I also wondered what it is that keeps one product relevant, useful, and beautiful for decades (i.e., Crest) and another instant-landfill fodder (i.e., unwearably thin argyle polyester socks). What is it exactly that makes one product's design good and another so bad?

Basic economics dictates that good products are items consumers buy from manufacturers angling to make a profit. What makes a product successful is not one but many things, a tangled web of form and function that enables the product to (a) serve an unmet need, (b) be easy to use,



Story by James Nestor
Illustrations by Andrew Holder

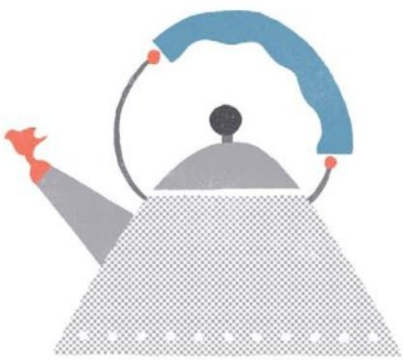
(c) be attractive, and (d) be efficient to produce. In other words, the product needs to make sense to the consumer. A tube of Crest makes sense; so does a bottle of Chartreuse. These things are useful and pretty, sure, but they are more than the sum of their parts. Good products have a feel about them that other products don't.

Early products fit the needs of the environments from which they were produced. Near forests, people might have built wooden arrows that helped them hunt animals beneath a canopy of trees; by the sea, they built hooks from bone to gather food from the deep. But product modality changed as trade developed between cultures. Those products that garnered the most in trade had to catch a merchant's eye—an elaborate engraving on a sword, an ornate frieze on a clay vessel. Aesthetics became a factor.

By the Industrial Revolution, the cost of products had decreased as manufacturing processes developed. To compete and stay viable, good products also had to make economic sense.

By the 1950s, superindustrialized production lines became so efficient that more products became available to more people than at any other time in history. To keep people buying products more often, manufacturers developed various modes of planned obsolescence, in which products were developed in timely fashions and styles. Trends ruled.

In a world of new concerns, where landfills are growing, resources are dwindling, and economies are recessing, why is Crest a well-designed product and polyester argyle socks so crummy? Why is an Alessi tea kettle





better than the one I just bought at Walgreens? What makes an Eames side chair look timeless and a knockoff look so silly?

Good product design is about how the product works, the thought, organization, process, and manufacture of the thing that just makes it feel right. Take a quintessentially good modern product design—the iPod. Before the iPod there were many MP3 players on the market, some of which were more powerful, had more features, and cost less money. These were hard to use, ugly, and temperamental, and didn't make sense to a lot of consumers. Apple took the contents of these devices, thought them over, reorganized their parts, and processed them into a product that was accessible, simple, convenient, and pretty. The iPod rules the MP3-player market not by its technology but through its good design.

If the iPod—and history—shows us anything, it is that a good product exceeds the physical object, the way in which its parts are pieced together. Not to get too high flown, but good product design makes sense; bad product design doesn't. Which is why the same plastic, chemicals, ink, and paper that make Crest so good (and often sold out) can also make children's left-handed scissors and polyester socks so bad (and destined to rot on shelves for an eternity). It's not the materials themselves that make a product successful; it's the feel of the thing, or rather, how the thing makes *us* feel. Good products make us feel good.

Words you should know

Charrette: An intense period of design activity in which a group collaborates to work out a solution to a specific design problem. It's like a workshop, but sounds either more important or more pretentious.

In situ: The state in which designed products are tested. Architects use the term differently, to describe buildings created from raw materials at the location upon which the building will be built.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs: A theoretical psychology used by manufacturers to develop products that appeal to consumers. The pyramidal hierarchy begins with complex human needs at the top (creativity, morality) and ends with base needs at the bottom (food, water, air).

Open design: Like its computer programming cousin "open source," this is a process in which products are developed through publicly shared information. The open design approach is usually used for creating charitable products or new technologies.

Poka-yok: A Japanese-derived term of imbuing fail-safe devices in a product that help prevent consumers from using it incorrectly. The little tabs on cassette tapes that prevent overrecording are one example; so is the pop-up window in word-processing programs asking users if they want to save the document before shutting down.

TIMTOWTDI: Pronounced "Tim Toady," this acronym for "There is more than one way to do it" stresses that a problem can have numerous product development solutions. As for the people who use this phrase, we need only say "TDSSLTMAAMTMF" ("These dudes should spend less time making acronyms and more time making friends"). ▶

Best Buy

Good design isn't inextricably wed to a high price tag. These classic designs run the gamut of types and prices.

Under $100

Biopac biodegradable plates
biopac.co.uk

The United States produces a staggering 693,150 tons of garbage every day—about 250 million tons a year. Twenty-five percent of this waste by volume is polystyrene, an industrial polymer used to make, among other things, the petroleum-based plastic commonly known as Styrofoam. Scientists can't agree on how long it will take Styrofoam to degrade; a good guess is between 500 years and never. Whatever the number, it's clear we need a useful, cheap, environmentally conscious alternative to Styrofoam.

In response, British-based company Biopac has produced vegetable-starch-eating disposable plates (along with biodegradable plastics for medical supplies and horticulture products). Biopac's organic shapes and simulated woodgrain finishes make the line of fully decomposing, food-oriented disposables not only beautiful but essential to earth-minded picnickers.





Over $100

Technics SL-1200 turntable
panasonic.com

In the 1960s and early 1970s, playing an LP on a turntable was a tenuous affair: At higher volumes feedback often resonated through the tone arms; some motors played too fast, others too slow, and there was no way of adjusting the speed; vibrations from even walking a few feet from some players could be enough for needles to pop and skip. Turntables were generally noisy, temperamental, and difficult.

In response to these common complaints, Japanese company Matsushita (which became Panasonic) released the first SL-1200 turntables in 1972. The SL-1200 included a heavy base to greatly minimize skipping and feedback; a magnetic direct-drive system to avoid wear and slippage; and a revolutionary variable pitch control to allow adjustment of the record's speed. The result was a turntable that played quieter, cleaner, and more accurately than any of its competitors. Soon after its introduction, the SL-1200 became the industry standard for radio and the de rigueur accessory for audiophiles.

The SL-1200 has remained in continuous production for 37 years as the world's best-selling turntable because it is easy to use, striking to look at, and ridiculously durable. Just ask your local DJ.



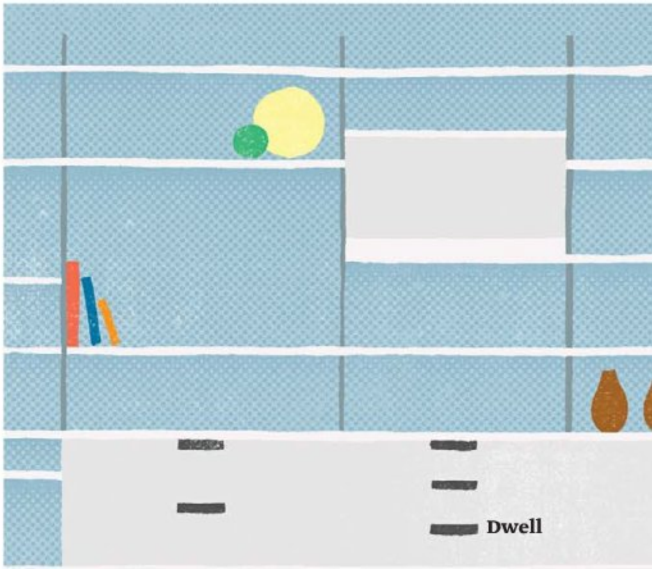
Over $1000

606 Universal Shelving System by Dieter Rams for Vitsoe
vitsoe.com

Dieter Rams, one of the world's most influential product designers, was at a crisis in the early 1980s. He saw in the world around him nothing but "an impenetrable confusion of forms, colors, and noises." The result of his malaise was his now-famous ten commandments of good product design. Rams argued design must be innovative, useful, aesthetic, unobtrusive, honest, durable, and thorough to the last detail; help a product be understood; be concerned with the environment; and be designed as little as possible.

Though articulated later in his career, these commandments are strikingly presaged in this 1960 shelving system. Easy to install, fully portable, and modular, the Universal Shelving System is customizable with a series of adjustable-depth shelves, multiuse cabinets, wall-mounting, and compressed-feet stabilizers. Twiggy-thin and streamlined, Rams's design cuts a striking profile, lending any interior a razor-sharp focus and freshness.

The 606 Universal Shelving System has been in continual production for nearly 50 years for a reason, actually many reasons. It is built to last forever and can be easily moved from location to location, and its "anti-waste" and "anti-style" design ensures its appeal in the next century as it has in the past.



Buyer Beware

Bad design can be not just unattractive but unhealthy. Steer clear of this trio of second-rate offerings.

Under $100

Torchiere halogen lamps

Introduced in 1982, torchiere halogen lamps were an inexpensive and potentially energy-saving alternative to incandescent lamps. By the mid-1990s, 40 million had been sold in the United States as the lamps became the default accessory in college dorm rooms nationwide. That is, right before they started killing people. The flaw is in the tungsten metal filaments of halogen bulbs, which consume significantly less electricity (good) yet burn at over 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit to do so (bad). By 1997, the lamps were responsible for 189 fires and 11 deaths. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission and the halogen lamp industry cooperatively called for a recall of over 40 million of these lamps.

While many of their functions are admirable (they're inexpensive and conserve energy), torchieres break the prime directive of product design: They are dangerous (not to mention ugly). Today, hundreds of millions of pounds of torchiere lamps sit alongside head-cracking lawn darts, bottles of unused fen-phen, and explosion-prone fuel tanks of Ford Pintos in landfills nationwide as examples of lethally bad product design.

Over $100

Maple baseball bats

In Babe Ruth's era, ballplayers used bats made from hickory, a solid, heavy wood that rarely breaks. But hickory's weight led many players to switch to lighter white ash-wood bats. Though ash tends to flake or crack, it seldom shatters into large pieces, and these bats have been in heavy rotation for over 50 years with few incidents of injury-causing breakage.

In the late 1990s, however, maple bats gained popularity as Barry Bonds's tool of choice in his record-breaking home-run streak. Today, half of all professional players use maple bats. Though lighter than hickory and ash, maple breaks in a more dangerous way, with a tendency to explode upon impact, sending large, jagged shards hundreds of feet into the air.

In 2008 alone, Pittsburgh Pirates hitting coach Don Long suffered nerve damage when his cheek was sliced open by one of these shards, fan Susan Rhodes's jaw was cut in two places while sitting four rows back in Dodger stadium, and umpire Brian O'Nora left a game bleeding profusely from the shrapnel of a shattered maple bat. After review in 2008, a Major League Baseball safety committee decided to allow their continued use.

Over $1000

French bulldogs

I am not trying to make you hundreds of thousands of French bulldog owners mad. You are beautiful people. I adore your loving pets and admire your beautiful shoes. In fact, a friend's French bulldog is at my feet now. (This is true.) Damn, it's cute. But please, for a moment, consider the following.

French bulldogs are bad design. Their production is costly, environmentally damaging, and, worse, inhumane. Most Frenchies cannot be naturally birthed and require Caesarean-section deliveries, which are expensive and can permanently damage the mother. As a pure breed, French bulldogs are not cost-efficient and are not user-friendly. Centuries of inbreeding have made them genetically inferior in nature and susceptible to many congenital conditions, including severe breathing impairment, eye infections, irregularly sized digestive systems that make them vomit, impaired thyroid function, eye proptosis (i.e., eyes popping out of their heads), and a laundry list of other cruel and costly ailments.

If Frenchies were store-bought products the EPA, FDA, and UN would ban them. These dogs are a real dog. ▶







Like a Rock

When it comes to great product design, the material is often the message. Matuse's wetsuits prove why.

For the last 50 years wetsuits have been made from neoprene, a petroleum-based rubber filled with nitrogen to create an insulating barrier against cold water. Neoprene has about a 70 percent water impermeability, which makes a two-to-three-millimeter-thick suit comfortable to wear in 60-degree-or-higher water. However, in colder water, neoprene suits cannot provide sufficient insulation unless they are up to five or even seven millimeters thick. Thick neoprene suits restrain swimming performance in the water, forcing surfers to choose between being either cold and flexible or warm and immobile.

In the early 1970s, Yamamoto Corporation of Japan developed an alternative called geoprene. Geoprene is an organic rubber constructed out of 99.7 percent limestone (primarily made up of the ancient shells of marine organisms). It offers up to 98 percent water impermeability at half the thickness and lasts twice as long as its neoprene counterpart (which can degrade after six months as nitrogen leaches from the suit).

"People were shocked to try on a suit that was so warm, flexible, styled right, and that would last longer, perform better, and was environmentally friendly," says John Campbell, founding partner of Matuse Wetsuits, the first U.S. wetsuit manufacturer to use high amounts of geoprene in its suits. In 2005, Matuse expanded its line of geoprene suits and, as a result, opened up new possibilities in cold-water surfing. "I have a year-and-half-old Matuse I surf in when the water is 30 degrees and it's minus 5 out," says Yassine Ouhilal, a surf photographer who lives and surfs in Nova Scotia. "I could never have done this in a neoprene suit.



Books you should read



The Champ

Phaidon Design Classics: 001–999
Phaidon Press, 2006
This quintessential collection of 999 product designs in three thigh-numbing volumes explores product design from the late 1600s to the present. They include everything from 300-year-old scissors to modern airplanes and the work of such 20th-century stalwarts as Marcel Breuer, Le Corbusier, Henry Dreyfuss, Ray and Charles Eames, and a host of up-and-comers. In homage to one of the primary principles of good design—durability—most of the products featured here are still in production.

The Challenger

Designing the 21st Century by Charlotte and Peter Fiell
Taschen, 2005
This new tome offers ruminations and forecasts on the future of global product design. It features interviews with contemporary designers from across the globe, each of whom is determined to push product design forward, whether it's for a wine glass or a windmill.

The Dark Horse

Humble Masterpieces: Everyday Marvels of Design by Paola Antonelli
Collins Design, 2006
The curator of the Museum of Modern Art's Department of Design and Architecture offers a treatise on the extraordinary beauty of 100 ordinary things. Safety pins, condoms, and the Rubik's Cube are just a few of the common items Antonelli vets under a microscope, explaining the origins of these simple objects and why we can't live without them. ▶

Product Developments



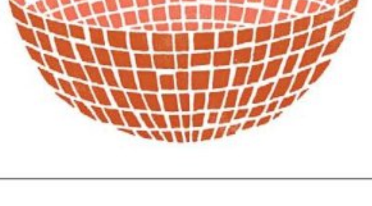
We asked three product designers from three different fields what the future holds. Oddly, none of them mentioned crystal balls.

Furniture

Stephen Burks is the principal of the New York studio Readymade Projects, whose works range from consumer products to lighting, furniture, home accessories, and more. He is considered one of the leading lights of American design, with clients ranging from B&B Italia to Calvin Klein.

"The future of furniture design is bridging industrial production with artisanal handmade craftsmanship. There is a growing interest in having character in a piece, a story. People with a $10,000 sofa or a $5,000 lounge chair now want to fill in the blank with some piece of authenticity that goes beyond just branding. This is where artisanally made furniture fits in. To do this, I see a move toward working more with the developing world.

I have clients—Cappellini, B&B Italia, Moroso—that are looking to create a bridge from handcrafted production from places like India, Peru, and Senegal into first-world distribution. Even though a lot of these companies may not be espousing the mantra "Save the planet," they are acting in that direction. When a company like Cappellini says they want to make a brand of handcrafted, eco-conscious furniture, that has huge implications. More companies will follow."



Transportation

Grant Petersen is the owner of Rivendell Bicycle Works, the Walnut Creek, California, bike manufacturer that for the last decade has spearheaded a back-to-basics retro-future revolution in biking.

"Bike makers are searching for less costly, more consistent ways to make bikes, with the ultimate goal of being able to outsource the labor to any country in the world. The future is injection-molded thermoplastic frames, with integral batteries and rechargers. The bikes will be disposable and recyclable, and they'll have a *Wall-E* look about them.

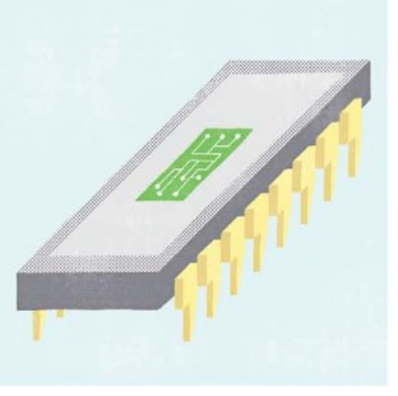
But if the goal is to get more people on bikes, I don't think 'a better urban bike' will do it. We need infrastructures—cities and laws and support—for the bicycle and against the car. Take away parking spaces for cars, give bikes the right of way at intersections, put car-parking garages a quarter mile from shopping centers, shorten commutes, and create light-rail systems with free bike parking, and people will ride bikes more. City planners, not bike designers, are the ones with influence."

Consumer Electronics

Iain Roberts coleads the Chicago studio of Ideo, one of the most innovative design companies in the world. Ideo's product designs range from the first computer mouse for Apple to the SmartGauge digital instrument cluster for Ford hybrid cars.

"We're seeing a blurring of boundaries in consumer electronics: the physical and digital, the consumer and creator. In the case of products, increasingly everything has a chip inside of it, and that's enabling us to create richer, more connected experiences. We're seeing experiences that tie together multiple channels—mobile, Internet, TV—which allow us to do more with the same product. In some ways, products are becoming as much about service delivery and media consumption as anything else.

From a design perspective, this provides us interesting challenges. The dominant element in a lot of the products we are designing is the screen: It's changed the way we design and now we're needing to build the product around it. We're looking to tie the physical and graphical interaction together as closely as possible, paying new attention to materials, surface finishes, and details as well as focusing on sensory aspects such as touch and sound. We're looking to products to engage all the senses."



San Francisco Living: Home Tours



The popular San Francisco Living: Home Tours weekend is the first tour series of its kind in the Bay Area to promote a wide variety of architectural styles, neighborhoods, and residences—all from the architect's point of view. Don't miss it this September!

Weekend Events included with Ticket Price:

The Architect's Forum | September 10, 6:00 pm

Home Tours Headquarters | September 12+13, 9:00 am-4:00 pm

Cocktails at the Headquarters | September 12, 4:00 pm

SF Living 2009 Exhibition | September 12+13, 10:00 am-4:00 pm

Tour of Dwell + Lunch with the Editors* | September 11, 11:30 am
Additional fee applies.

September 12+13, 2009
10:00 am – 4:00 pm

www.aiasf.org/hometours

Tours are self-guided.
Visit www.aiasf.org/hometours or call 415.362.7397 to purchase tickets.

Ticket Prices	Before September 1	After September 1
AIA Members	$60 one day	$70 one day
Nonmembers	$75 one day	$85 one day

Presenters AIA San Francisco

Center for Architecture + Design

Media Sponsors dwell 7x7

The San Francisco Living: Home Tours Weekend is an exclusive program of the Architecture and the City festival, a month-long celebration featuring tours, films, exhibitions, lectures and more. Join us September 1-30, 2009. Visit www.aiasf.org/archandcity for more information.

Clockwise from top left: Courtesy of Boor Bridges Architecture, © Marion Brenner, Courtesy of Strachan Forgan, © Ken Gutmaker Photography

Feathered Edge: A New Installation by Ball-Nogues Studio

JULY 26–NOV 15, 2009

MOCA PACIFIC DESIGN CENTER
8687 MELROSE AVENUE, WEST HOLLYWOOD, CA 90069

Feathered Edge: A New Installation by Ball-Nogues Studio is made possible by endowment support from The Ron Burkle Endowment for Architecture and Design Programs. Major support is provided by The MOCA Architecture & Design Council and the City of West Hollywood Arts and Cultural Affairs Commission. The exhibition is sponsored by Dwell. Additional support is provided by Environment. Generous support for MOCA Pacific Design Center is provided by Charles S. Cohen.

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From the Founder of AFAR

Dear friend,

When I was 22, my dear old Aunt Theresa sent me on a bus tour of Europe. I loved that first glimpse of the world beyond the United States.

But I learned that I wanted to travel in an entirely different way.

So, as I got older and trekked around the globe for business and for fun, I couch-surfed in Switzerland, volunteered in a job-training center in South Africa, and explored the outback of Borneo. Many countries, experiences, and years later, here I am, starting a travel magazine.

I got here by learning about the joy of spontaneity—the thrill of letting the next encounter decide the next destination. And I learned that travel is about the people you meet and the insights you pick up, not about letting a fixed itinerary determine your experience.

I also learned that there are many others like me who are searching for more meaning and authenticity. A way to connect with people and places on a deeper level. A way to really experience the world. A way of truly seeing instead of just looking.

What there wasn't, however, was a source of inspiration and ideas for travelers like us. And that's why I decided to start *Afar*.

It's a magazine that's as open to the unexpected as you are, that knows travel is really about the precious and life-changing moments when we learn about other cultures. A magazine about the real experience of travel.

In this special preview section, I've pulled together some of my favorite selections from *Afar*'s premier issue. I hope they will persuade you to join us on the journey.

Sincerely,

Greg Sullivan
FOUNDER



For *Afar's* premier issue, writer Samuel Fromartz (here, walking beside Canal St. Martin in Paris's 10th arrondissement) apprenticed with a *boulanger* and learned the secret to a perfect baguette.

PAGE 109: DANIELE MATTIOLI; THIS PAGE: BRIAN DOBEN

AFAR

Resident /// Local View



AS TOLD TO **NICOLE SOLIS**
PORTRAIT BY **STEPHEN McLAREN**
CITY PHOTOS BY **GRAHAM MARKS**
MAP BY **BROWN BIRD DESIGN**



NAME: Sophie Howarth **AGE:** 34
NEIGHBORHOOD: East London (aka the East End) **LIVED HERE SINCE:** 1999
OCCUPATION: Founder and director of the School of Life (theschooloflife.com), which she describes as "an apothecary for the mind." The school offers courses in Love, Work, Play, Family, and Politics, as well as Sunday "sermons" on pessimism, punctuality, curiosity, and other topics delivered by the likes of writers Alain de Botton and Geoff Dyer.

I LIVE JUST BEHIND COLUMBIA ROAD in East London, which, if you're going to be glamorous about it, you call Shoreditch. I moved there because I loved the community and the simple domestic Victorian architecture. Now my brother, sister, and mum have all moved in within a few streets, so we have a real sense of family there. You can walk though my back garden to visit my sister's back garden.

East London is full of contradiction—a source of tension and wonder. London's financial center, the City, is possibly the richest square mile in the world; it butts up against a part of the East End that has a level of poverty we should be ashamed of today.

This was where waves of immigration came through in the 17th century. There are a lot of people here in their 20s, 30s, and 40s, as well as families that have been here for generations.

In a really good way, East London is in flux. This area is en route to where the Olympics are happening in 2012, so transport links are getting better, things are smartening up. The house that I live in was declared uninhabitable in the '70s, but my street is one of the most coveted places now.

My house is mainly filled up with odd finds from the shops on Columbia Road. I always find funny old pictures that are out of fashion. It's like art—though you'd hardly call it that now. My favorite shop on Columbia Road is **Vintage Heaven** ❶ [82 Columbia Rd.]. If you wander through to the back, you'll find Cakehole, a little café where the walls are packed with inexpensive art, and cakes are served on an assortment of 1950s china.

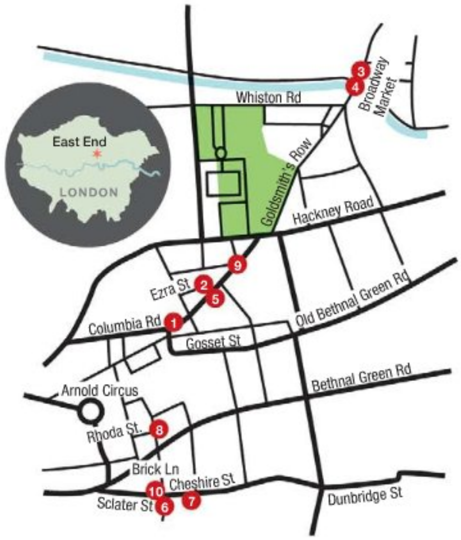
The East End is a great place to do street photography. It's got such an eclectic mix of people and such a strong history of photography, like bits of Manhattan.

Sunday Shoots ❷ [7 Ezra St., sundayshoots.com], near Columbia Road, is a kind of pop-up photography studio. Every Sunday morning, Seamus Ryan picks a theme—like "film noir" or "windswept"—and people come and get their portraits taken for free. Then he puts the pictures up on his Web site the next day.

But it's the markets that really make East London. There are three fantastic markets within three minutes of where I live. Columbia Road is London's main flower market. On Sundays, it's totally filled with flowers. It's an amazing place.

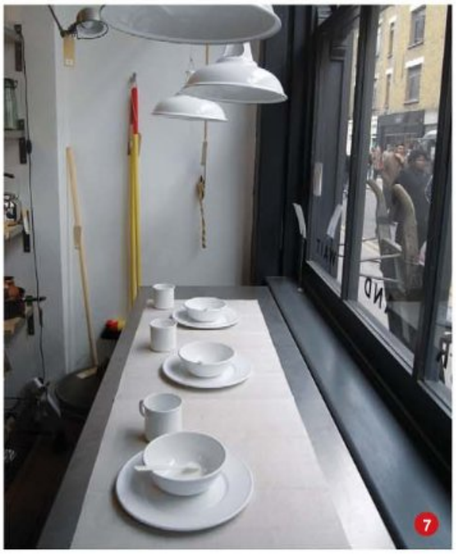
Brick Lane Market has everything from bric-a-brac to high-end design. **Broadway Market** ❸ [Broadway between London Fields and Regent's Canal] is a lovely foodie market every Saturday. I always head to the far end by London Fields, where a stall sells mushrooms on toast. Five or six amazing varieties of mushrooms—some only for the brave—are fried up in front of your eyes with fresh parsley and garlic. The smell haunts the whole market.

Lots of people don't know that there's a canal, **Regent's Canal** ❹, that winds through the middle of London. Hire a bike at Broadway Market, and you can carry on down the canal to Olympic Park. I want to get everyone rambling around London on back roads on bikes. ▲



MORE ON THE EAST END: East, a festival held every March, celebrates the creative side of East London with 300 events featuring performance, art, history, fashion, design, film, and food. Artists Gilbert and George have their studio in the Spitalfields area of East London.













5. ROYAL OAK PUB
"There's a lovely little courtyard behind the Royal Oak. On a Sunday morning, you can get coffee from the pub, tucked away from the flower market."
73 Columbia Rd.
44/(0) 20-7729-2220
royaloaklondon.com

6. BRICK LANE RESTAURANTS
"There are Somali and Bangladeshi communities in the East End, so there's a strong element of that. Brick Lane is the curry center of London."
Brick Lane, south of Cheshire Street
visitbricklane.com

7. LABOUR AND WAIT
"There's a lovely street called Cheshire Street. Labour and Wait sells old-fashioned homewares: twine and string and gardening tools and glasses, all beautifully laid out like a '50s housewares store."
18 Cheshire St.
44/(0) 20-7729-6253
labourandwait.co.uk

8. UNTO THIS LAST
"Unto This Last, named after a John Ruskin book on craftsmanship, is a micro-factory where they make all the furniture—sideboards, tables, etc.—right in front of you."
230 Brick Ln.
44/(0) 20-7613-0882
www.untothislast.co.uk

9. COLUMBIA ROAD FLOWER MARKET
Columbia Road
Sundays, 8 a.m.–3 p.m.
columbiaroad.info

10. BRICK LANE MARKET
Brick Lane between Bethnal Green Road and Wentworth Street
Sundays, 8 a.m.–3 p.m.



BY FRANK VIVIANO



There Are No Specialists in Venezuela

AFAR SENDS A WRITER ON A SPONTANEOUS JOURNEY

THE DAY BEFORE I FLEW TO CARACAS, VENEZUELA, I'd heard that Hermann Mejia was back home after several years in New York. A born and bred *caraqueño*, Hermann is a veteran cartoonist at *Mad* magazine, the bible of ironic truths. A perfect source in a country I had never visited before. I called him shortly after I checked in to the Hotel Avila on Monday evening, then went to the bar and ate a hamburger that must have weighed two pounds. I spent the entire night listening to the crackle of small-arms fire in the barrios that spilled over the surrounding hills. Googling at 2 a.m., I discovered that Caracas has the highest homicide rate on Earth, a stunning

Our writer knew he was going somewhere, but we didn't tell him where until three days before he left.

two dozen times the figure for the gun-crazed United States.

Hermann picked me up the next morning with his wife, Elisa Hevia, a puppeteer. "You must be nuts to stay in this neighborhood," he said. Over lunch, I related a cryptic exchange I'd had in the taxi from the airport. The key to understanding Venezuela, the driver had said, is that "everything is mixed together." Hermann laughed and said, "The first time I went to the States, art directors were totally confused by my portfolio. 'What are you, exactly?' they'd say. I'd been a sculptor some of the time, a commercial illustrator or semi-surrealist painter a lot of the time, and a caricaturist most of the time. I had no idea that artists specialize in other countries. Wow! Nobody specializes here."



There was a word for it, said Elisa, who added that Hermann also designs postage stamps. "We call it *todero*, a mixture of the words *torero* and *todos*, like a guy who is a bullfighter but also does everything else: *todos*. All Venezuelans are *toderos*."

After lunch, Hermann and I went off to meet his cousin Joey. He had shoulders and biceps the size of a California governor's, and looked like someone who ate a dozen Hotel Avila hamburgers daily. It was obvious, if unspoken, that Joey was to provide muscle during our walk through downtown Caracas.

When I asked what Joey did for a living, Hermann said, "You know, a little of this and a little of that. Right now he sells toys." One of our stops was a boutique that sold a weird array of statues, including depictions of notorious armed robbers, a famous physician in a natty three-piece suit and derby, and what I took to be the more conventional Virgin Mary. Not quite, Hermann informed me. Like the doctor and the thieves, this particular effigy of Mary was a fetish idol in the practice of Venezuelan Santería. "Almost everybody believes in it," he said of the religion.

"But I thought Venezuela was overwhelmingly Catholic," I said. "Of course it is!" Hermann exclaimed. "That's why Mary is in both the churches and the Santería shops." In Caracas, even the mother of God is a *todera*.

The next day, as I flew over a dazzling landscape of seacoast, inland jungle, and vast rolling plains, heading for the city of Mérida in the Andean highlands, I continued pondering the cabbie's allusions to mixing. Its demographic effects were obvious in the faces you saw in the Venezuelan streets. In 2000, according to the latest national census, 67 percent of the population was officially of mixed-race origin. Today, that figure likely tops 70 percent. Venezuela is a cultural and genetic stew that first united indigenous Amazonians with Afro-Caribbeans and Spanish conquistadors and has since added infusions of Italians, Portuguese, Lebanese, and Chinese.

There's no arguing with the physical results. From the barrio slums, where *el béisbol* sandlots are dream factories, the country has sent more than 200 players to the major leagues. Meanwhile, since 1955, Venezuelan women have won an unrivaled 16 titles as Miss Universe, Miss World, Miss Earth, or Miss International. They are heirs to the fabled Maria Lionza, a folkloric Amazonian earth goddess with decidedly un-Amazonian green eyes—another iconic figure in Venezuelan Santería and a paragon of beauty.

As much as lawless Caracas, the city of Mérida was *toderoville*, although slowed to the beat of its own peaceful rhythms. Sitting in a café with background music that wandered through hip-hop, salsa, and techno to the string concertos of Antonio Vivaldi, I learned that my newest acquaintance, David Puentes, was a trained gourmet chef who quadrupled as tour guide, interpreter, and hotel administrator. Nothing surprised me anymore.

At the end of my trip, I was still puzzling over the logic of *toderismo*. From the window of my return flight, an older logic unfolded 30,000 feet below, stretching as far as the eye could see.

Venezuela's gargantuan expanse of virgin wilderness is a living Darwinian laboratory, home to an astonishing 8,000 species of animals. Among them, I read in a book purchased in Mérida, are 1,200 different birds, including a couple dozen varieties of hawk; a reptile population that boasts five species of caiman, a distant relation of the alligator; and the mind-boggling anaconda, a snake that can grow to more than 30 feet in length. A single square mile of the country's rain forest shelters 50,000 different varieties of insects.

Looking down, I suddenly realized that *toderismo* was an echo, in its peculiar way, of this fantastic biodiversity. In a nation of 26.8 million citizens, there were 26.8 million wildly unstable definitions of "typical Venezuelan." Half a millennium after Christopher Columbus visited Venezuela, his and Maria Lionza's metaphoric progeny remain unsettled in their identity—every individual a unique endemic species. *Toderos.* **A**

LEFT: TONO LABRA/AGE FOTOSTOCK; RIGHT: TATIANA CARDEAL

AFAR

Mix /// World Gallery

In *Afar*'s premier issue, the Mix department explores the diverse ways people around the globe cover their lowly toes—or don't. See the entire eclectic display in the first issue, on newsstands August 18.


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BY JULIA COSGROVE
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How Bunny Chow Became South Africa's National Street Food



THE U.S. HAS HOT DOGS; South Africa has bunny chow. Made of a hollowed-out loaf of bread filled with vegetarian or meat curry, the beloved—and rabbit-free—street food is ubiquitous throughout the country. The dish originated in Indian restaurants in the coastal city of Durban in the 1940s. When apartheid laws prevented blacks from dining in restaurants, enterprising cooks started serving the self-contained take-out meal from their windows.

"Anyone who came near an Indian restaurant in the second half of the century thinks he invented bunny chow," says Minal Hajratwala, a journalist and author whose great-great-uncle, G.C. Kapitan, really did create the first vegetarian "beans bunny" at his eponymous Durban restaurant, which operated from 1912 to 1992. A young Nelson Mandela was a regular at an offshoot of Kapitan's in Johannesburg.

Hajratwala says that no one can say definitively how bunny chow got its name. The most widely accepted tale is that shopkeepers and restaurant owners on Grey Street—the nexus of Durban's Indian community—were known as *banias* (a caste of merchants), and "bunny" is a corruption of bania.

Today, for the authentic Durban experience, order bunny chow at any of the take-out restaurants near the Juma Masjid Mosque in the historic Grey Street area. Closer to the water is a food court stand called A Taste of India (Wilson's Wharf, 18 Boatmans Rd., 27/31-301-3131) that scored top marks in a bunny chow competition last year. For a sit-down meal, try the prawn-topped version at Bean Bag Bohemia (18 Windermere Rd., Morningside, 27/31-309-6019), an art-filled hangout housed in a 19th-century building. A

THE VIRGIN: The scooped-out center of the bread in bunny chow is known as the virgin, and it is customarily placed on top of the curry before serving. According to Durban historian Allan Jackson, it is considered poor form to take someone else's virgin without asking.



Durbanites of all ages dig into bunny chow at the Victory Lounge, one of the many take-out restaurants in the Grey Street area that specialize in the South African dish.









Bunny Chow

(SERVES 4)

Adapted from Cook Sister! (cooksister.com), Jeanne Horak-Druiff's food blog. A native South African, Horak-Druiff favors lamb bunny chow.

INGREDIENTS

2 tbsp vegetable oil
1 cinnamon stick
4 green cardamom pods, lightly crushed
1 medium onion, sliced thinly into rings
2–3 curry leaves
4 tsp Durban masala* (if unavailable, use red curry powder)
1 tsp ground turmeric
1½ tsp grated ginger
1½ tsp crushed garlic
2 large tomatoes, chopped, or a 14-oz can chopped tomatoes
2¼ pounds lamb, cubed
3–4 potatoes, peeled and cubed
2 tsp garam masala
Salt, to taste
1 or 2 crusty, square loaves of bread (small farmhouse loaves are best)
Fresh coriander leaves for garnish

MAKE IT

1. Heat the oil and add the cinnamon stick, cardamom pods, onion, and curry leaves. Fry until the onion is golden brown in color. **2.** Add the Durban masala (or curry powder), turmeric, ginger, garlic, and tomato. Cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until the mix resembles a puree. **3.** Add the meat and cook for about 10 minutes. Then add the potatoes and about ¼ cup of water. Lower the heat and simmer on low. Keep an eye on it to make sure the bottom of the pot does not burn. **4.** When the meat is cooked through and the potatoes are tender (about 30 minutes), add the garam masala. Test for seasoning and add salt if necessary. Simmer for 10 minutes on low heat. **5.** Halve the loaves and scoop out the "virgins," leaving the crusts to form bowls. **6.** Spoon the curry into the half loaves and serve, garnished with coriander leaves. The virgin can be dipped into the curry and eaten as well.

*Available in Durban at Reddy's Oriental Spices & Take-Away (78 Victoria Market, Victoria Street, 27/31-306-3176).



BY JEFF GREENWALD
PHOTOS BY JOCK MONTGOMERY







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Spend the Night in a Tree House Reachable Only by Zip Line

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO OVERSLEEP in the jungle, especially when you're staying in a wooden tree house perched 200 feet above the forest floor. Long before dawn, the eerie, ascending hoots of black-crested gibbons filter in from the distant hills. I scramble out of bed and grab my binoculars, but a thick mist lies over the trees, and the elusive apes could be miles away.

Six tree houses set within the Bokeo Nature Reserve in Laos form the heart of the Gibbon Experience. Created by French conservationist Jean-François Reumaux in 2005, GibbonX, as it's known, is an effort to protect the reserve, 475 square miles of forest that harbors the endangered creatures for which the project is named. Poaching, logging, and slash-and-burn farming threatened the area until Reumaux convinced Lao authorities to let him set up a conservation-based business there. GibbonX aims to provide local villagers with an alternative, and more lucrative, livelihood: tourism.

One of the biggest thrills of the tree houses lies in reaching them. Far above the Bokeo valleys arcs a network of steel zip lines, some stretching as far as 1,500 feet before terminating on the tree-house platforms.

Reaching Tree House #5, where I stayed with five housemates, required three hours of hiking

GIBBONS BY DAVE WATTS

FUN FACTS ABOUT GIBBONS: Some black-crested gibbons aren't black. Adult females turn a buff or beige color as they mature. Different species of gibbons can be identified by their calls. Mated pairs of gibbons may sing duets together. Like other apes (as opposed to monkeys), gibbons have no tails. Gibbons swing through trees by their arms, a technique called brachiation.

as well as zipping—at speeds up to 35 mph—on seven lines. Secured in a climbing-style harness, I clipped my rollers onto a cable and took a running start. Nothing prepared me for the sheer, shrieking exhilaration of zipping hundreds of feet above the ground, the tropical air on my face and the buzz of the rollers in my ears. It was like horizontal skydiving.

The very sight of the tree house took me back to my slingshot-toting days. The funky open patio's straw roof sheltered a dining table, damp-proof mattresses, a rainwater shower, and a composting toilet.

Once we got settled, my housemates and I descended into the jungle with a guide, a Lao teen wearing cargo shorts and an Oakland Raiders cap. He led us past banyan trunks and through a riot of creeping vines. We emerged at a tributary of the Nam Khan River, flicking off leeches as our aide searched the ground (fruitlessly, I'm semi-relieved to say) for tiger tracks.

By sunset, we were back at the tree house. The jungle pulsed with life. I couldn't see them, but I knew they were out there: clouded leopards, giant squirrels, barking deer. The cries of birds such as bulbuls and drongos filled three octaves, and I thought I heard the creaking of a giant hornbill's wings.

Abruptly, a low whine swelled to a loud buzz. One of the two cables leading to our tree house vibrated madly, and our guide zipped into our dining area wearing a grin and carrying dinner: sticky rice, a local beef-and-cabbage dish, curried potatoes, and fresh pineapple. Afterward, the guests of Tree House #5 played rummy by candlelight, and turned in as the moon sunk behind the hills. It was only 9 p.m., but our simian neighbors, wherever they were, would be waking us early. **A**

Tree Houses Around the World



Sanya Nanshan, China



Ngong House, Kenya



Daintree Eco Lodge & Spa, Australia



The Tree House Lodge, Costa Rica



Hapuku Lodge, New Zealand

AUSTRALIA

Daintree Eco Lodge & Spa, Daintree, Queensland
61/(0) 74-098-6100
daintree-ecolodge.com.au
Fifteen air-conditioned villas hover over tropical rain-forest land traditionally held by the aboriginal Kuku Yalanji people. Today, the Kuku Yalanji help manage the lodge and restaurant, set on a lagoon. From $392.

CHINA

Sanya Nanshan Treehouse Resort and Beach Club, Hainan
(808) 248-7241
treehousesofhawaii.com/nanshan.html
Four rustic beachfront tree houses offer views of the Guanyin Buddha statue in the South China Sea. The island of Hainan is the ancestral home of its Li inhabitants. From $51.

COSTA RICA

The Tree House Lodge, Gandoca-Manzanillo Wildlife Refuge, Limón
506/(0) 2-750-0706
costaricatreehouse.com
A 100-year-old tree forms one of the bathroom walls in this lodge, built from fallen trees pulled out of the jungle by oxen. A portion of your bill is donated to the Green Iguana Foundation, which raises iguanas to be released into the wild. From $300.

INDIA

Safari Land Farm & Guest House, near Ootacamund, Tamil Nadu
91/(0) 423-252-6937
safarilandresorts.com
Opened to the public in 2006, the former summer retreat for the royal family of Hyderabad borders the Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary. Six bamboo tree houses perch up to 40 feet above a stream popular with elephants, peacocks, and other native fauna. Local guides organize jungle treks and sunrise safaris. From $70.

KENYA

Ngong House, Nairobi
254/(0) 2-089-1856
ngonghouse.com
Six wooden houses decorated with art from throughout Africa stand on stilts among acacia trees. The bed in the Boat House nestles in a canoe salvaged from Kenya's Indian Ocean coast. Kenyan chefs serve private haute cuisine dinners. From $800.

NEW ZEALAND

Hapuku Lodge & Tree Houses, Kaikoura
64/(0) 3-319-6559
hapukulodge.com
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Lion Sands Private Game Reserve, Mpumalanga
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CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: DANIELE MATTIOLI, BRIAN DOBEN, CANDACE FEIT, DANA IWACHOW, ANDERS BERGSTEDT/MASKOT/SIPA PRESS FOR MIX (PAGE 116) PHOTO CREDITS SEE PREMIER ISSUE.



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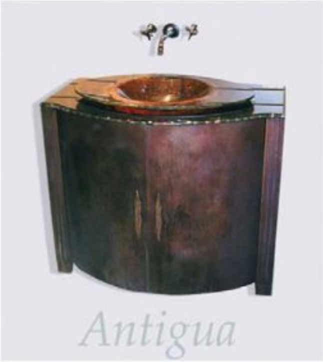


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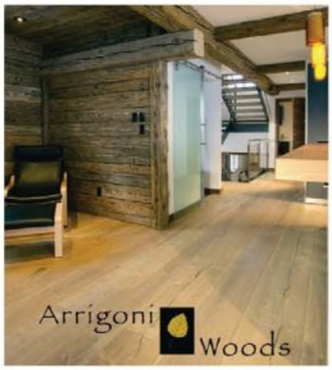
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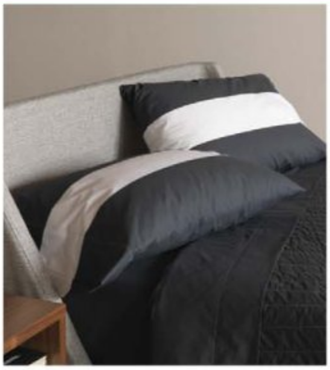
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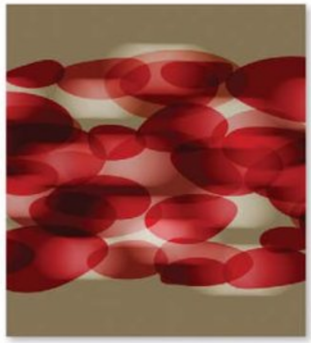


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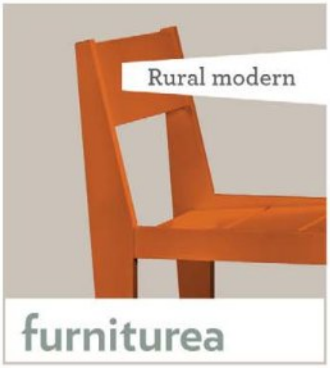


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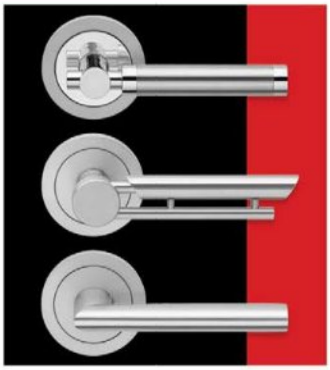
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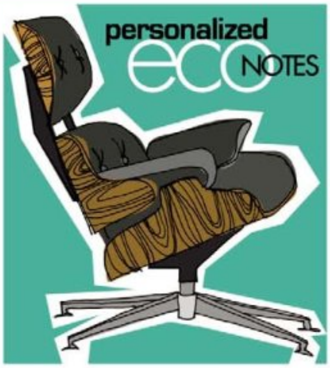


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***Designing the 21st Century* by Charlotte and Peter Fiell (Taschen Books, 2005)**
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Handled With Care

Before moving with his parents from Warsaw to Paris at age 16, Krzysztof Kwiecinski often visited his grandmother in her 800-square-foot apartment. Shortly after her death in 2005, then 25-year-old Kwiecinski returned to Poland and moved into her home, which was filled with a hodgepodge of wooden furniture accumulated since the late 1940s, when his great-grandparents moved into the apartment. Though Kwiecinski wanted to modernize the space, he "didn't want the old life of the apartment to disappear completely."

With Warsaw architecture firm Centrala, Kwiecinski arrived at a compromise. Together, they dismantled the apartment's old doors, tables, bookshelves, and chairs, and used them to build a 12-by-10-foot free-standing unit—dubbed the Hardbox—that contains a kitchen, toilet, shower, bathtub, and fold-out guest bed. The rules: No panel could be the same color or shape, nor could they alter design details like moldings or keyholes. Even the doorpost lined with faded pencil marks tracking Kwiecinski's height as a growing boy was incorporated into the piece.

In a world where things that should be saved are all too often lost, and those that should be replaced aren't, the Hardbox strikes an admirable balance of sentiment and modernity. ▮

Story by Audrey Tempelsman
Photo by Nicolas Grospierre